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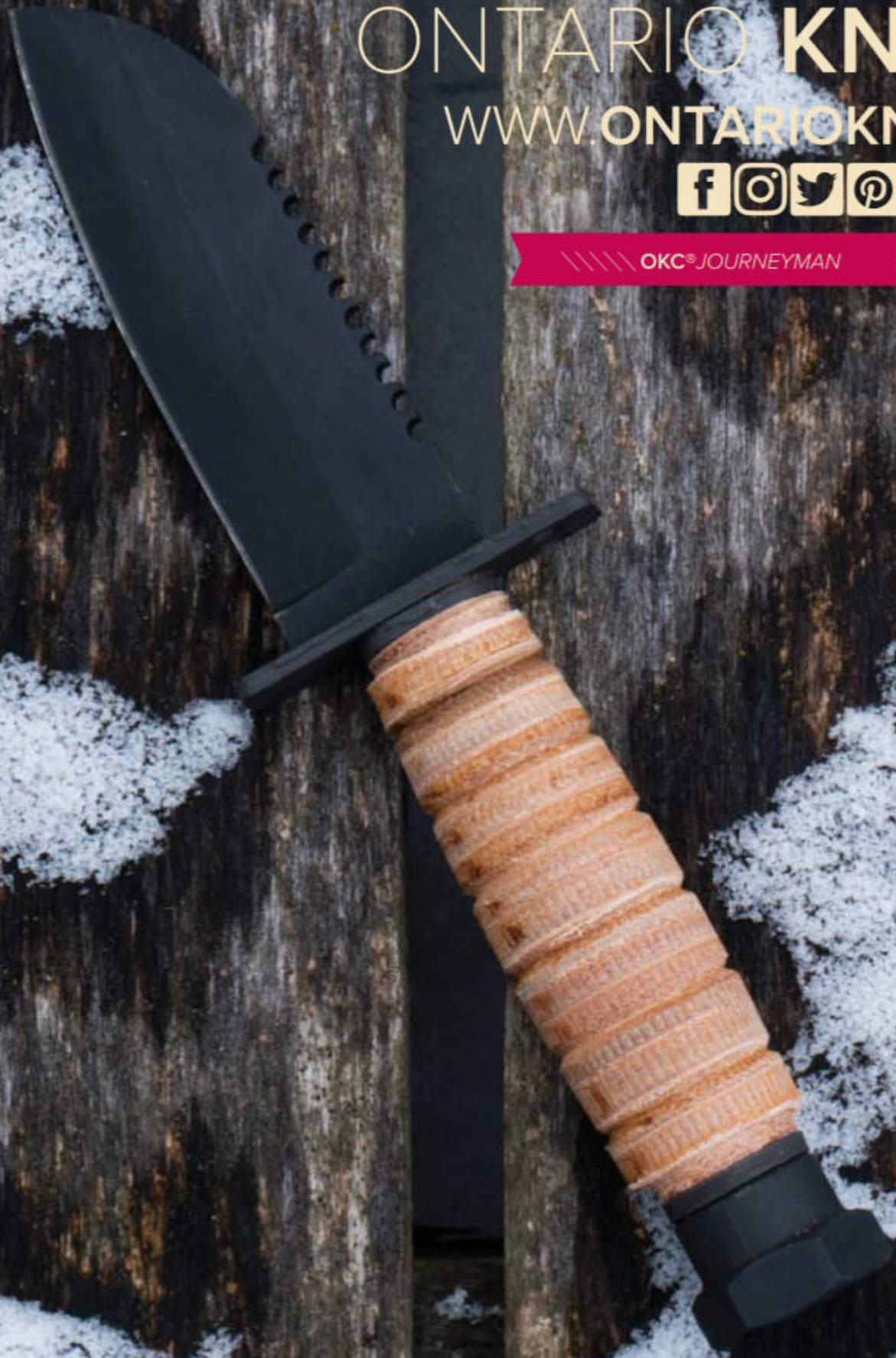
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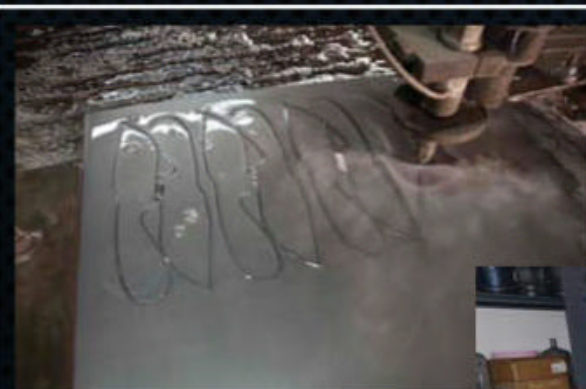
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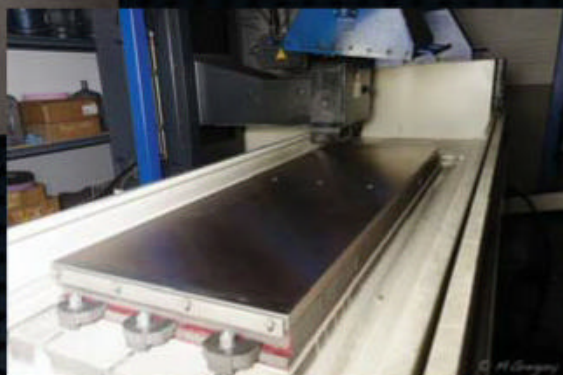


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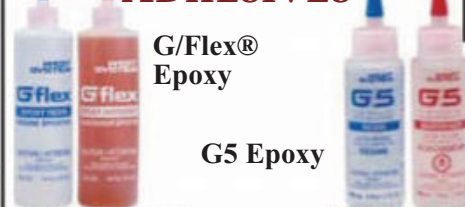
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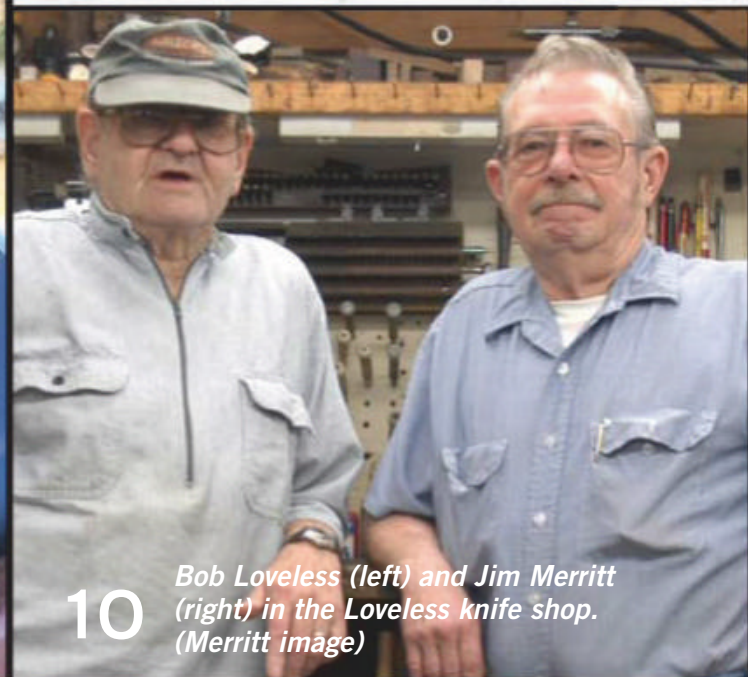


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Kinematic™ mechanism powers CRKT Provoke. (CRKT image)



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Bob Loveless (left) and Jim Merritt (right) in the Loveless knife shop. (Merritt image)

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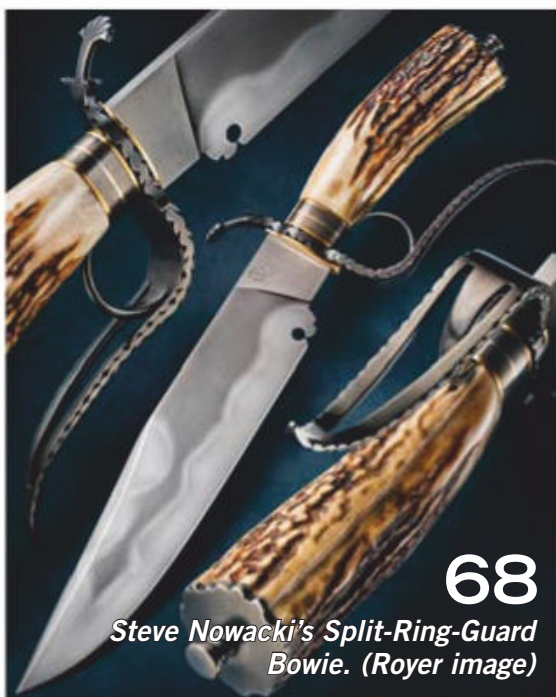
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How to Walk the Dog

As I'm walking the puppy around the farm this a.m., I was thinking of all the ongoing knife stuff. Regarding "Ivories Under Fire Again" (page 74, December *BLADE*®), I would not want an elephant killed for the ivory to go on my knife handle. If the elephant dies of natural causes, a piece of the ivory on my knife handle would be great. As *BLADE* Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Buster Warenski once said, there is nothing more elegant than ivory.

There's got to be some logical reasoning on this issue. Hang the ones that kill the elephants just for the ivory. Knives illegal with ivory handles, with blades too long, with double edges, with push buttons, and on and on—there just seems to be no end to what you can't have.

I was also thinking of my grandson (and other kids). I started a knife collection for him and give him a knife on each birthday and Christmas. Now I guess he will be a criminal for having a certain knife because of me.

I was also thinking of the good ol' days when some of us boys carried pocketknives to school. We once had a fundraiser when I was in the fifth or sixth grade, and the prize that I really wanted was a fixed-blade knife with a stag handle (maybe imitation stag). It sure looked good in that catalog.

Thanks for what you do to help the situations that now exist.

Rick Royster, a letter via e-mail

Editor's note: For the latest on the legal status of elephant, ancient and other ivories, visit elephantprotection.org.

Mosaic Damascus, *not* Nitro-V

Thank you for focusing on my work so prominently ("Knives with Mad Skulls," page 13, February *BLADE*®). However, you had some of the specs wrong on my knife. The blade is 15N20/1095 mosaic damascus with a 350-layer twisted edge bar. No part of the piece is made of Nitro-V. As well, my current ranking in the American Bladesmith Society is journeyman smith. I have not finished testing for master

smith (though I am planning to in June at the *BLADE* Show).

Matthew Parkinson, a letter via e-mail

BLADE thanks Mr. Parkinson for the clarifications. He will be among a number of ABS smiths testing for the rating of either journeyman or master smith during the *BLADE* Show June 7-9 at the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta. For more on the show visit bladeshow.com.

He and His Knife Were!

I just wanted to say thank you for posting a picture of my damascus saddlehorn trapper in "Were You There?" (page 12, September *BLADE*®). I am overwhelmed and can't thank you enough.

Tom Ploppert, a letter via e-mail

USA, USA!

I am a long-time *BLADE*® reader who enjoys the knife tests as well as the articles on new and existing knives, and I usually want to go buy one of each mentioned. I am also a strong supporter of American companies and U.S. workers and prefer to buy knives made in my good ol' USA. When I do buy from other countries, there are some I prefer not to support.

That being said, I would really appreciate it if you included the country of origin for all knives discussed in your magazine. Other than A.G. Russell Knives, Internet companies seldom offer that information. In areas where there is not a "knife superstore," there is

no other option than the Internet, and I don't buy without knowing the country of origin.

*Bo Bienvenu, Navy veteran,
Prairieville, Louisiana*

Editor's note: While we don't always provide such information, we do in cases where we know the country of origin of all the knives featured in a story.

Bah, Humbug Type?

I'm probably sticking my foot in my mouth again, but here goes. Regarding the writer of the letter titled "Price Gouging?" on page 6 of the December *BLADE*® about the price of knives having "skyrocketed," I have the feeling that he is a bah, humbug-type of person.

Just my opinion.

Tim (R.V.) Alverson, a letter via e-mail

Model and MSRP Corrections

I noticed a couple of errors in the gut-hook story on page 44 of the September *BLADE*®. The Camillus knife featured in that story is the Camillus Prym1 Veil, not the Camillus Prym 1. Also, the MSRP for the Prym1 Veil is \$21.99 rather than the \$18.95 you reported.

Peyton Conlin, a letter via e-mail

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Made circa 1992, the **Viking Dagger** by the late **Jim Schmidt** is a classic example of the brilliant knifemaking, forging and fileworking talent that Schmidt was.

Schmidt's backlog was such that it was extremely difficult for him to accept new custom orders, though he made an exception for the Viking Dagger. The fact that it was in a style that was new for him at the time made it even more challenging—and, being the artistic genius he was, he loved challenges.

He forged the ladder-pattern damascus blade from 203 and W2 carbon steels. A small dagger is hidden in the ancient walrus ivory handle. The cover knife's overall length: 15.75 inches. It comes with a beautiful sheath with frog and floral-engraved button. In all, the knife took Schmidt six months to complete.

An image of the Viking dagger with the small dagger that fits in the handle and also the sheath appears on page 12. For more information on it contact **Dave Ellis** of **Exquisiteknives.com** at 760-945-7177 exquisiteknives@gmail.com.

Eric Eggly of the old **PointSeven** photographed the cover knife. The inset image of the **CRKT Provoke** is courtesy of **CRKT**.

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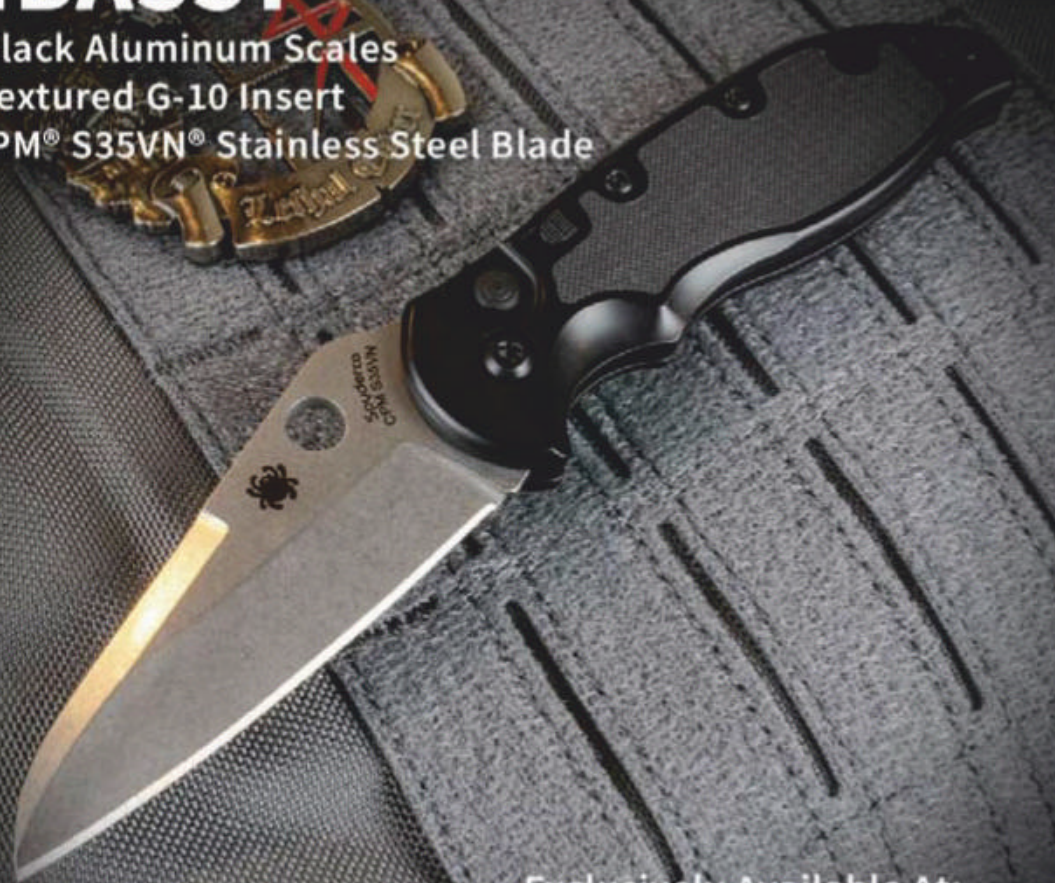
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END OF TWO ERAS

An era officially ended with the recent passing of Jim Merritt, a passing that presages the end of another era as well.

Admired by many in the custom knife fraternity, Merritt died Dec. 28. He was known for working for many years with BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Bob Loveless in the Loveless shop in the making of the world-famous and widely coveted Loveless custom knives. Loveless made his first knife in 1954 in a legendary career that spanned the following 56 years. Merritt joined Loveless in 1982, continuing a tradition of Loveless employing other makers to help in the building of Loveless knives, a tradition that began in 1971 with Steve Johnson. Johnson worked with Loveless until 1974. That tradition also included Kuzan Oda, who assisted Loveless in the making of Loveless knives circa 1975-76.

However, Merritt worked with Loveless far longer than any other maker, doing so up until Loveless's passing in 2010. Along the way others assisted in the Loveless knifemaking operation, including John Wilson circa 2000. Those who assisted Loveless and Merritt did such operations as the blade grinding, while Bob would fit the guards, shape the handles and make the sheaths. For a few years in the early 2000s Wilson made the guards and sheaths, the latter an operation Merritt assumed thereafter. Following 2010, Merritt continued making Loveless/Merritt knives in the Loveless shop until he passed away.

Today, Aaron Merritt, Jim Merritt's grandson, said he owns 60 percent of the Loveless shop in Riverside, California, and Loveless's widow, Yoshi, owns the other 40 percent. And, Aaron added, the Loveless shop and all of the knifemaking equipment inside it will go to auction April 27.

In other words, yet another era—the making of knives in the Loveless shop with the original Loveless equipment—ostensibly will end, too.

"It was my grandfather's wish that he wanted the [Loveless] shop to end when he passed," Aaron said. It is a wish Aaron indicated he hopes will be granted with the selling of the shop and all the equipment that produced Loveless and Loveless/Merritt knives for so many decades. "The intent of the auction is to protect anyone who has spent a dollar on a Loveless knife," Aaron stressed, "[to protect] the trust and faith in the integrity behind these knives."

"I implore any of you who read this to cherish the knives of these great men because they will never be seen again," Aaron's brother Jim wrote on his Facebook page. "Loveless knives and Loveless/Merritt knives will forever live on in the hearts and minds of many of us, but the torch will never be passed and the shop is officially closed."

At press time, the logistics for the auction were being worked out. Aaron said that among the items that will not be sold are the old Loveless and Loveless/Merritt knife patterns. All of those as well as other proprietary items remain in Aaron's possession. Meanwhile,



Bob Loveless (left) and Jim Merritt (right) in the Loveless shop. (Aaron Merritt image)

the fashioning of reproductions of Loveless knives by many makers—each repro knife bearing the mark of each individual maker and not that of Loveless, of course—continues worldwide.

The auction will be open to the public. For more information contact Aaron at 2019merrittstate@gmail.com. As he said, "Everyone who wants a piece of the Loveless shop is welcome to come."

WILLIAM "BILL" MCHENRY

The cutlery industry suffered another loss in December when William "Bill" McHenry passed away from natural causes at his home Dec. 22. The long-time knifemaker of Wyoming, Rhode Island, sold his first knife in 1988 and was known for classically built pieces, especially folders with creative mechanisms, including automatics. Along with his stepson Jason Williams, McHenry designed the AXIS™ lock mechanism first employed by Benchmade on the model 710 in 1999. Benchmade continues to use the AXIS lock on a selection of its folders to this day.

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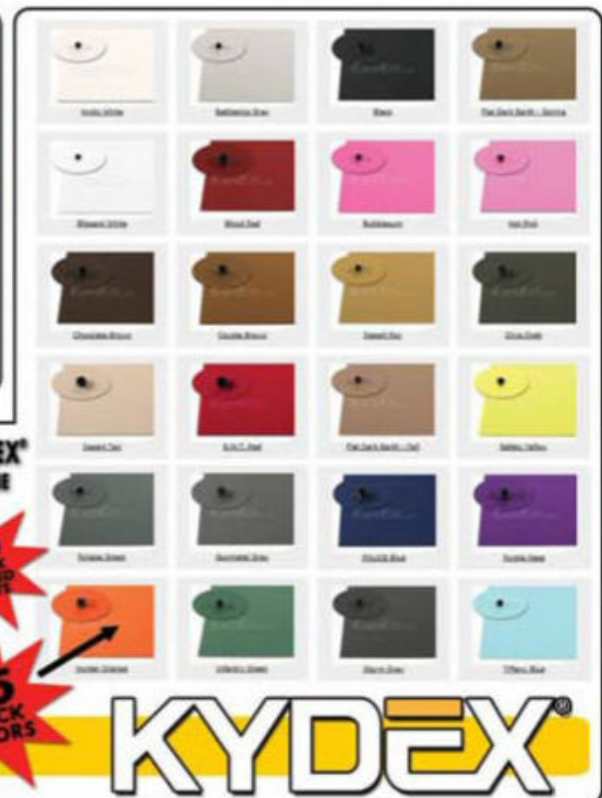
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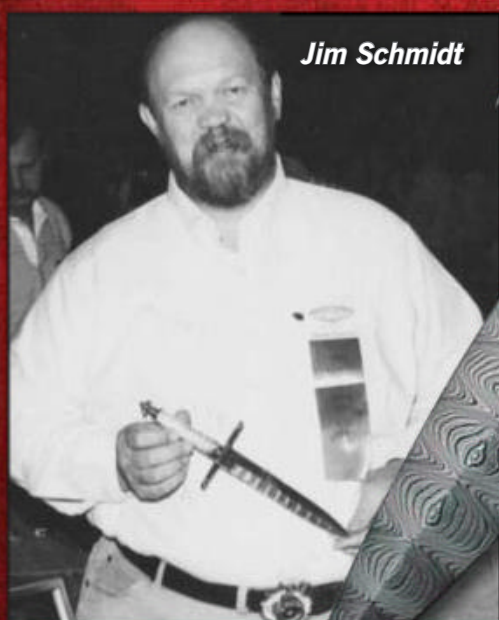
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THE QUIET MAN



Jim Schmidt

This issue's cover knife, the Viking Dagger by Jim Schmidt includes a push knife that insets in the butt of the handle, and a handsome sheath. The ladder-pattern damascus blade is 203 and W2 carbon steels, and the handle is ancient walrus ivory. Overall length: 15.75 inches. The knife originally belonged to BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member and Schmidt's close friend, Phil Lobred. (from the Dave Ellis collection; Ellis image)

JIM SCHMIDT STOOD OUT NOT ONLY FOR HIS SKILL BUT ALSO FOR HIS HEART

Written by BLADE® Magazine field editor Mike Haskew and with stellar photography by Francesco Pachi, James A. Schmidt: The Great Master chronicles the life and knives of the incomparable maker. (Francesco Pachi image)





The Goblin was Schmidt's trademark folder, with the butt of the folder carved into the face of a goblin complete with eyes, nose, teeth and tongue. This one is the "Slither Slider" with a letter of authenticity signed by Schmidt as it appears in James A. Schmidt: The Great Master. (Francesco Pachi image)

Sometimes a memory casts a long shadow across the lives and histories of others. However, in the case of Jim Schmidt there is no shadow—only a bright, never-flickering light of quiet strength, humanity, patience, and an oh-so spectacular gift for making dazzling custom knives.

There is no argument when it comes to Schmidt's place in the pantheon of legendary custom knifemakers. Though he left us too soon on the day before The Knifemakers' Guild Show in 2000, he packed a tremendous amount of living into 60 years, personified the term "Renaissance Man," and left an enduring legacy among family, friends, students and those he mentored in the art that he loved best.

In 1981 Schmidt was one of the first six men ever to achieve the rating of American Bladesmith Society master smith, and the names of those who accompanied him in that honor make his inclusion speak for itself—BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Bill Moran, Jimmy Fikes, Don Fogg, Don Hastings and Bill Bagwell. Three decades later, Fogg, Jim's longtime friend, delivered the induction speech for Schmidt's entry into the ABS Hall of Fame.



Mrs. Linda Schmidt (left) helped every way she could in managing Jim's business affairs, including answering letters, filing tax returns, and providing invaluable love and support. Here she enjoys Jim clowning around with a dagger at a 1980s Knifemakers' Guild Show.



When it came to filework, Schmidt's work was among the finest anywhere. An example appears here on the spine (left) of his all-damascus "shell-lock" folder. (SharpByCoop image)

Dave Ellis stated this two-blade shell-lock folder is the only one Schmidt made with a triple bolster. It features a blackened damascus blade, black-lip mother-of-pearl scales, and a gold bail and blade openers. It is aptly named "Black Flag." The shell lock is for the second blade. Schmidt made the knife in June 1997. (from the Dave Ellis collection; Ellis image)



According to Dave Ellis, "Hummingbird" was among the first custom knives to employ a gold-and-mother-of-pearl opening stud. Made in March 1995, the folder features damascus, gold-lip mother-of-pearl scales and gold pins. (from the Dave Ellis collection; Ellis image)



Dave Ellis indicated the rarity and quality of Schmidt's folders makes them quite coveted on the collector market.

True enough, throughout his career Jim produced some of the most flawless damascus ever forged. His handforged fixed blades and folders remain among the finest custom knives extant. His Goblin knives are the stuff of dreams, fantasies come alive and held in the hands of those who are lucky enough to own one. Schmidt knives, to this day, are among the most sought after and prized in the knife-collecting universe. His influence looms as large as his physical presence did in life. He taught some of the best makers anywhere the basics of the craft and welcomed them into his shop and his home in Ballston, New York. He mentored Steve Schwarzer, Barry Davis and the artist known as Dellana, to name a few. And Jim was an organizer of the famed Ashokan bladesmithing seminar in New York. That event has grown to perhaps the best-known learning experience of its kind.

But Schmidt was much more than a knifemaking legend. He inspired photographer Francesco Pachi to commission a limited edition book on his life and work in 2012, *James A. Schmidt: The Great Master*. The finished product is an exquisite journey through a breathtaking catalog of knives, lives and living to the fullest. Jim collected African art and shared that passion with long-time friend Phil Lobred, coordinator of the Art Knife Invitational, Cutlery Hall Of Famer and a groundbreaking knife collector in his own right. Jim collected jade, seashells, antique arms and armor, and medieval art. He worked the land in Ballston Lake, farming and raising livestock. He was a

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champion hot rod enthusiast, builder of flintlock rifles, and a teacher of auto body shop skills in a local high school.

Through it all Jim and his wife of 37 years, Linda, made an incomparable team. As Jim's knifemaking status grew, Linda helped every way she could in managing the business affairs that followed. She helped answer letters, filed tax returns, and provided invaluable love and support.

GENTLE GIANT

Schmidt was a quiet man, and some folks thought he resembled the famed actor and singer Burl Ives. He was a giant, a gentle one, in so many ways. He knew how to be an incredible friend, to offer advice and support, and—yes—when the situation required it he could be as tough as necessary. These human characteristics combined with an artist's skills made him more than most people could hope to achieve in a short lifespan. Today, he is remembered best for simply being Jim Schmidt.

"He was an exceptional craftsman with a great eye for design," Schwarzer



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PAST MASTERS |



Complete with fileworked blade spine, “Grim Bull” was one of the few buffalo-horn knives Schmidt made. Completed in June 1990, it boasts bold damascus patterns for the blade and bolster. (from the Dave Ellis collection; Ellis image)

recalled, “and until recently probably the best forged-blade finisher in the world. He could not be matched. During his time, he was at the top of the field as far as finish work and did pretty standard patterns, wanting everything to be as perfect as possible.

“He was one of the most profound teachers I ever had, and one of the guys I really looked up to,” Steve continued. “One time I said, ‘Mr. Schmidt, would you take a look at my knives?’ He looked at them and then at me and said, ‘Well, if your knifemaking skills ever catch up with your pattern welding, you’ll be a force to be reckoned with.’ He also taught me about filework. He was the kingpin, and anybody who did filework back then learned from

Schmidt or tried to emulate Schmidt.

“Once I had done a series of filework all over a knife, and I was so proud of it I was about to bust my buttons. I said to him, ‘So, what do you think?’ He said, ‘Would you buy a car with four different hubcaps on it? Filework is supposed to tell a story, and you’ve got random partial sentences.’”

Dellana met Schmidt in the mid-1980s, and at the time she was already an accomplished goldsmith. She had made a small knife and placed it on her table during a craft show. “Then these two people in lumberjack-style clothes came up and the guy said, ‘I see you make knives,’” she laughed. “I told him the whole story about it. At the end of my tale he said, ‘I make knives too. Would you like to see one?’ He pulled a folder out of his pocket and my jaw dropped!”

Later, Dellana visited Jim and Linda and became fascinated with the forge, hammering steel. From the first sparks that flew off that initial damascus billet, she was hooked.

“Jim’s attention to detail was unusual, and in that time I never saw the tiniest flaw in his damascus,” Dellana offered. “He was also curious technically and artistically. He was not afraid to do something that no one had seen before. His designs were unique in the knife world, and a lot of what you see today is a derivative of what he started long ago.”

For Dellana, one of the great honors in her custom knifemaking career came shortly after Schmidt’s death when collector Larry Marton asked her to complete one of Schmidt’s legendary Goblin knives that Jim had just begun working on before he passed away. She recalls that the project began with a piece of mule deer antler while Schmidt and

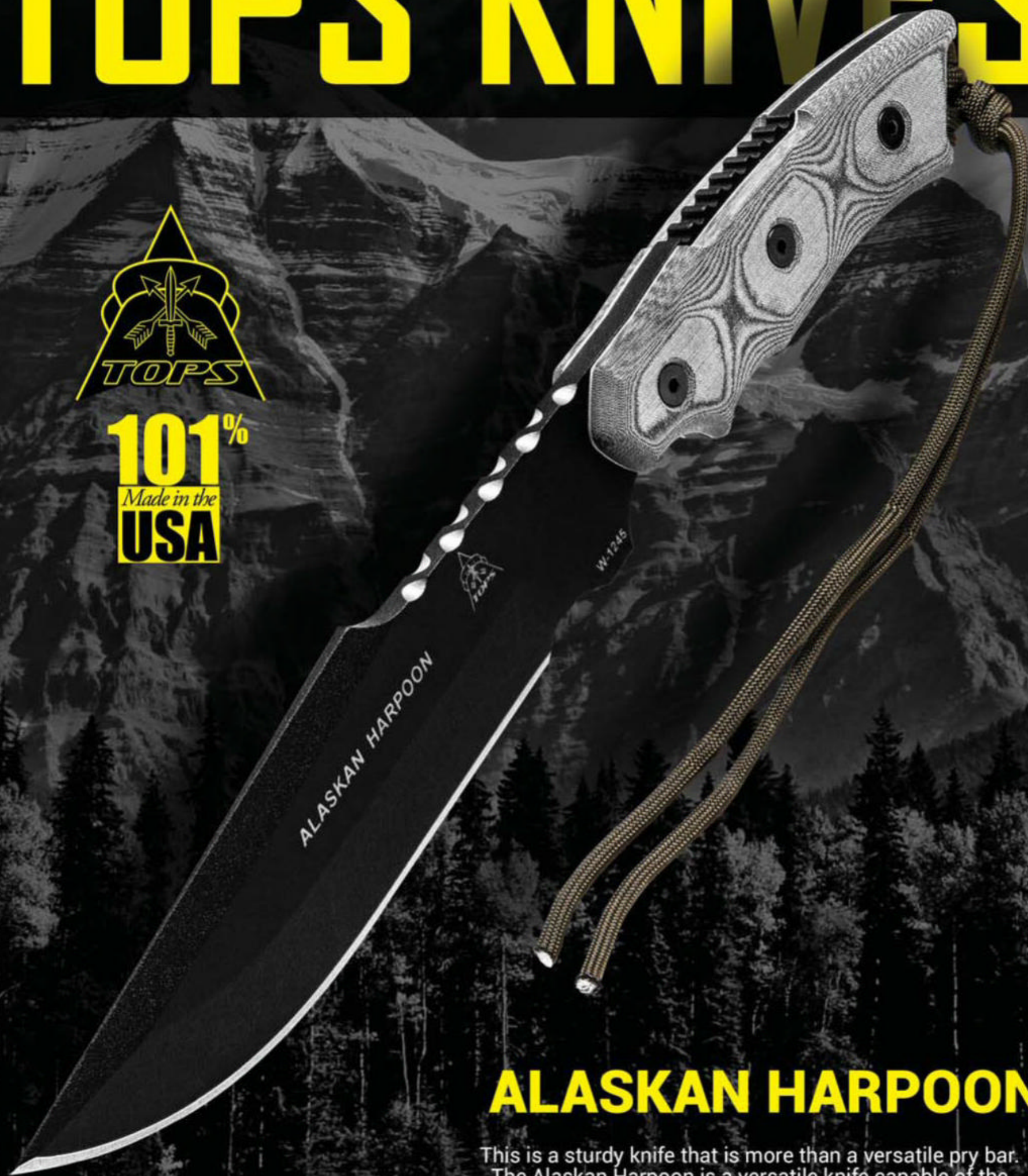


Schmidt’s “Yellow Jacket” double-lockback was the cover knife for the December 1996 BLADE®. The drop-point blade unlocks via the shell lock and the modified fighter blade with false edge unlocks via the bail. Rope filework adorns the knife inside and out.

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As Dave Ellis noted, any Schmidt folder with gold is special, including “Hand Candy” with gold pins. The scales are gold-lip mother-of-pearl. Schmidt made the knife in April 1994. (from the Dave Ellis collection; Ellis image)

Marton were talking in Schmidt’s shop. Jim made a quick sketch and picked out a couple of opals for eyes and then set it aside. When Dellana stepped in, the antler had been split and sanded, and a billet of Jim’s steel was available. She took it from there, and her teacher would have been so very proud. Dellana and Larry wrote about the resulting knife Dellana christened “Gryzzlesnick” in a two-part story of the same name in the October and November 2017 issues of *BLADE*®.

Marton was pleased with Gryzzlesnick, and it added to the richness of the

relationship the collector had established with the late knifemaker. “Jim was a shy and engaging personality, with total honesty, fair prices and an incredible talent,” Larry smiled. “In my estimation he ranks in the very top tier of the greatest custom knifemakers.”

According to Marton, the well-known characteristics of the Schmidt persona remain, including purity of design, commitment to excellence and the cornerstone of sole authorship, advancing filework into a true art form, meticulous crafting of damascus—and, of course, that pure gold trait of honesty.

SCHMIDT KNIFE VALUES

“Schmidt knives are immediately identifiable,” Marton explained. “and while others have tried to copy his designs they are still distinguishable. His folders certainly stand out; all are made with natural materials and incredible filework. He made two Viking daggers, one for me and later one for Phil Lobred. They are true masterpieces that deserve a place in a museum. With the exception of a few straight knives, such as the Viking daggers that have sold and resold for \$50,000 to \$100,000, his folders are the most desirable and usually bring from the mid-\$20,000s to the mid-\$30,000s.”

Collector and purveyor Dave Ellis of *Exquisiteknives.com* met Schmidt at the California Custom Knife Show years ago. “Jim was a large presence at the time, and I had never seen many of the features present on his knives,” Dave recalled. “I was unfamiliar with damascus, and I do know that his knives were way out of my price range. If I recall, all were over \$2,000, quite a bit of money in 1987. Fewer than 500 folders came out of the Schmidt shop, so their rarity as well as their quality keeps Jim Schmidt knives on the collector’s radar.”

Also a retired ABS master smith, Ellis is partial to Schmidt’s rare fixed blades such as the Viking daggers, quillon daggers with push knives in the butt, folders with gold liners, and the two-blade folders Jim made late in his career. He confirms that Schmidt knives range from a low of about \$2,000 for a simple fixed blade to \$20,000 for a damascus folder, and \$100,000 for a “decked out” Viking dagger.

Again, though, exquisite, sole-authored knives are only one facet of the beautifully cut diamond of a life that Jim Schmidt lived. “He was just a wonderful man, a wonderful soul,” mused Dellana. “He was a man of few words, but that was the basis of what made him so loved and respected.”

For the contact information for the sources in the story, see “Where To Get ‘Em” on page 81.

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Locking	Liner-lock



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SPEC CHART

KNIFE: Stah
MAKER: King Knives
BLADE LENGTH: 3"
BLADE STEEL: D2
LOCK: Stainless steel linerlock
HANDLE: Sheep horn
BOLSTERS: Stainless steel
EXTRAS: Mosaic pins and filework
WEIGHT: 8 ozs.
CLOSED LENGTH: 4"
MSRP: \$149

*To test the locks, the author took
a dead-blow hammer and tapped
the blades through pieces of
3/8-by-6-inch wood. The Stah
was first up.*



The Texas Wind took the dead-blow hammer test after the Stah.

SPEC CHART

KNIFE: Texas Wind
MAKER: Champion Knives
CLOSED LENGTH: 4 1/8"
BLADE LENGTH: 3.25"
LOCK: Titanium linerlock
BLADE STEEL: Elmax stainless
BOLSTERS: Stainless steel
HANDLE: Giraffe bone
EXTRAS: Damascus backspacer;
 zippered carry pouch
WEIGHT: 4 ozs.
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The Texas Wind features thumb-peg one-hand opening and a satin blade finish.

Linerlocks remain the lock of choice for most of today's folders, including the Texas Wind by Champion Knives and the Stah by King Knives. Both have the same linerlock setup but most everything else is different. A range-grade knife, the Texas Wind is straightforward and slim. The Stah is fully fileworked and curvaceous throughout. This "Spec Sheet" will come down to two issues: cutting performance and comfort in the hand.

TESTING

First was the simple paper slice. It indicates how keen the edge was when the knife left the shop. The Texas Wind's very sharp edge sliced clean and smooth. The Stah's was smooth and clean but there



Both locks held tight after the dead-blow hammer test, including the Stah spring despite it contacting the base of the blade too far to the right for optimum lockup and ease of opening and closing.

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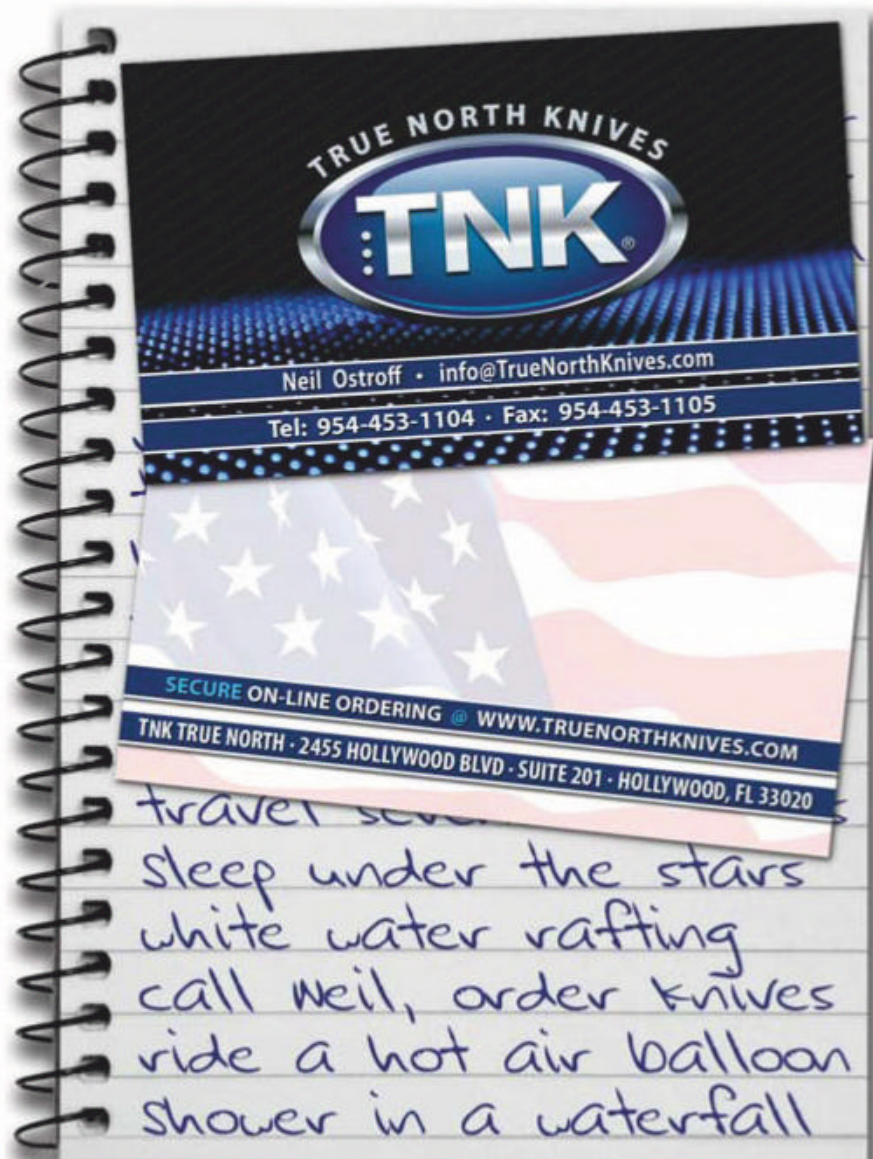


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SPEC SHEET |



Both knives were aggressive slicers of the 8-ounce leather rectangles, though the Texas Wind sliced more smoothly.



was a small flat spot on it that hung up when it contacted the cutting medium.

Next up: single-walled cardboard. The Stah powered through it cleanly and made a great *zipping* sound in the process. The Texas Wind aggressively sliced through the cardboard with hardly any pressure or noise.

It was time to vanquish some plastic board. The first two cuts with the Texas Wind slid through the medium too fast for me to stop. It wasn't long before I got the proper rhythm down for cleaner cuts—20 super-smooth slices. The Stah was just as smooth and fast for 20 slices, too.

Whittling on pressure-treated pine was next. Due to the type of wood, both knives gave chunky curly-cues. Neither had any problem shaving the medium. However, both had grip issues because of sharp edges on the liners. The Stah had a sharp handle edge where my little finger rode when cutting with the knife. The Texas Wind liner was sharp when I squeezed tight for cutting. It is an easy fix to soften the spots with an abrasive.

To test the locks, I took a dead-blow hammer and tapped the blades through pieces of 3/8-by-6-inch wood. Both locks loosened slightly but remained tight overall.

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Due to the type of wood, both knives gave chunky curly-cues. Neither had any problem shaving the medium. However, both had grip issues because of sharp edges on the liners.

I returned to the cutting portion of the program by slicing 8-ounce leather rectangles. Both knives were aggressive slicers, though the Texas Wind did so more smoothly. I could hear the leather crunch while cutting with both knives.

After that I crunch cut half-inch sisal rope until the knives would cut no more. I donned gloves to protect my hands from the sharp liners and started cutting. The Texas Wind crunched its way to 200 cuts and was still crunching. The Stah

also went to 200 crunching cuts but was starting to slide. I stopped at 200 to save on rope and my hand.

I WOULD ...

... soften/abrade the Texas Wind's liner opening by the lock. On the Stah, I'd soften the liner where the pinky finger rests on the handle during use, and widen the clearance between the blade and backspacer. The rubbing of the two is what caused the flat spot on the edge.

PICK 'EM

Plain or fancy, I give both knives a grade of excellent in the cutting department. The Texas Wind boasts smoother action and a tad better fit than the Stah, but the Stah has beautiful filework. Take your pick.

Both makers warrant against defects as long as the knife has not been abused. Contact Robert Champion at 806-622-3970, rchampion@gmail.com or rchampknives.com, and/or King Knives at 929-257-3996, kingknives@gmail.com or on Instagram at [king_knives_795](https://www.instagram.com/king_knives_795).

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Both knives crunch cut 200 times through the half-inch sisal rope. After 200 cuts each, the Texas Wind was still crunching but the Stah was starting to slide.

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PRIME CUTS

IN THE WORLD OF CUSTOM BLADE STEELS, MAKERS SEEK THE NEW AND RELY ON THE OLD



Tanner Hartingan, who fulfills orders at Knife and Gun Finishing Supplies and “dabbles” in knifemaking, said 1080 is great for novice smiths because of the fine edge it creates and it’s economical.

According to Scott Devanna, CTS XHP powder stainless steel continues to create buzz among custom knifemakers due in no small part to the fact that it excels in corrosion resistance and wear resistance/enhanced edge holding. Darriel Caston employs the steel for the 2.75-inch blade of his AbOhlone dress locking folder. (SharpByCoop image)

It's no secret that custom knifemakers are always on the lookout for new steels, the latest in materials that will up the performance of their knives or help make those pieces stand out on the display table.

A lone smith may get experimental, throwing anything from antique saw blades to metal still hot off the mill through the forge. But there are a few steel distributors and knifemaking suppliers who have some ideas of what new steels are trending in the world of knives. And who knows? The steel used by your favorite custom maker today may be a popular one used by large manufacturers tomorrow.

WHAT'S NEW?

What's new in blade steel is a query Scott Devanna, vice president of technology at SB Specialty Metals, gets from makers on a constant basis. "It's like the never-ending question," Devanna said. "It's like a lot of other businesses: Everyone is looking for the newest, the latest, the greatest."

As Devanna noted, it's the type of steel a maker uses that sells the knife. SB Specialty Metals moves a lot of CPM 154 and S30V stainless steels, both classics in high-end blades. CTS XHP continues to create buzz. A powder stainless steel, XHP is in high demand and short supply according to Devanna because a lot of it has been bought up. He indicated XHP has high performance in three of the four areas knifemakers judge a steel.

"You've got the corrosion resistance," he said. "You've got toughness because it's a powdered steel and you've got good edge holding, or wear resistance, because it's got enough alloying elements in it to form carbides in the steel, which gives you the wear resistance." A steel high in wear resistance, by definition, resists abrasion and holds an edge better but also is more difficult to sharpen. "And a lot of time ease of sharpening is overlooked," Devanna noted. "Can the average guy in the field resharpen the knife or keep an edge on it?"

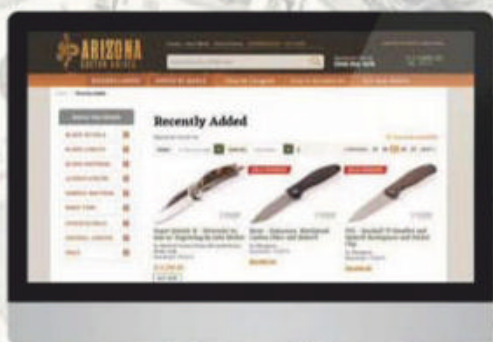
That question of machinability is what keeps some makers away from Devanna's top steel pick of CPM S30V, which was introduced about 15 years ago. Thanks to the steel's toughness,

Shanna Kemp of Jantz Supply observed that, "Damasteel's use of powder metal to create its stainless patterned steel provides a purity and consistency that is hard to attain using traditional forge-welding methods." The 8-inch blade of Tom Buckner's chef's knife features Damasteel stainless damascus. (SharpByCoop image)



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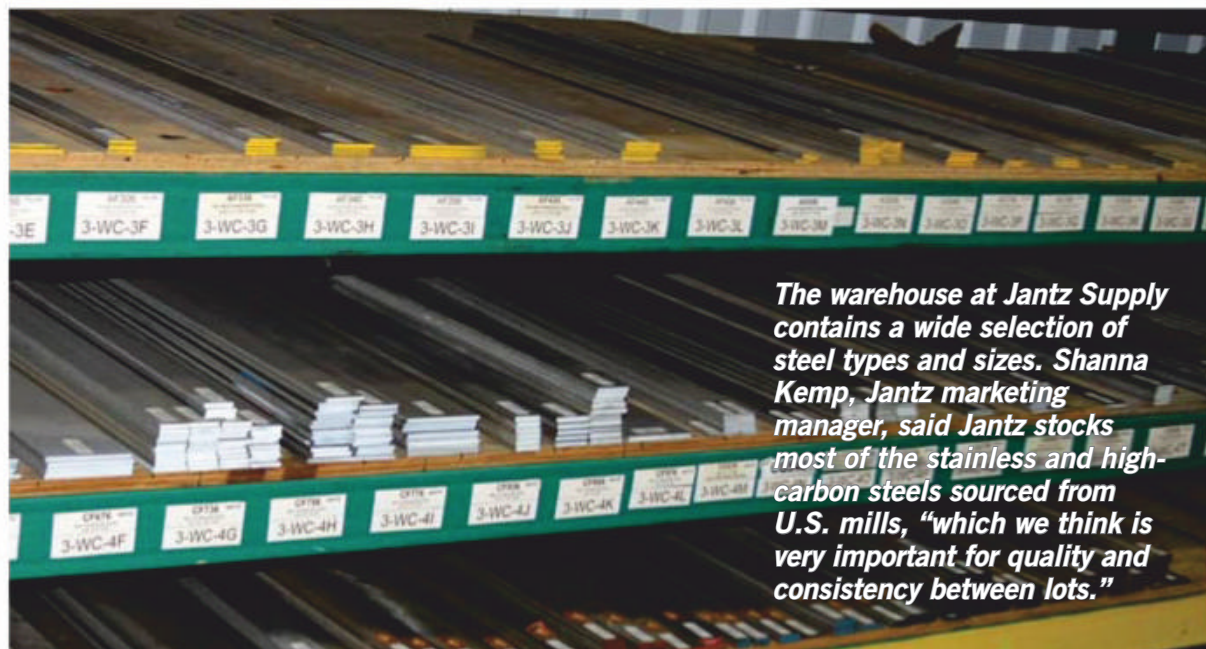


CPM 154 stainless steel has been among the most popular blade materials with custom knifemakers for some time, and there seems to be no end in sight. Burt Flanagan uses it on his slip joint with engraving by Alice Carter. (SharpByCoop image)

some makers spent a long time in their shops struggling to give their S30V blades a hand-rubbed finish. Still, Devanna observed, “It was good when it was introduced and it’s just as good today as it was then. And a lot of the other steels that have come out [since are] not as good.” He added that another steel grade introduced around the same time experiencing a resurgence goes by several different names, including CTS 204P, 20CV and M390.

For a number of years the trend in high-end blade steel has been powdered metal. For example, Devanna said PSF 27 is essentially a powdered D2 tool steel. Meanwhile, more and more makers seem to be reaching for nitrogen-infused

steels (see “All Aboard the Nitro Express” *BLADE* 2019 Complete Knife Guide and “Outer Limits of Sharp” February *BLADE*®). “It’s not easy to put nitrogen in steel,” he noted, “but if you can do it,



The warehouse at Jantz Supply contains a wide selection of steel types and sizes. Shanna Kemp, Jantz marketing manager, said Jantz stocks most of the stainless and high-carbon steels sourced from U.S. mills, “which we think is very important for quality and consistency between lots.”



According to Scott Devanna of SB Specialty Metals, SB moves a lot of CPM 154 and S30V stainless steels, both classics in high-end blades. Here's a sheet of SB's CPM 154 exhibiting dozens of blade pattern cutouts.

it does certain things that improve the steel's properties."

CLASSIC FORGED STEELS

The attraction of knifemaking to the do-it-yourself, hand-crafted types has continued to burn strong, thanks to the History Channel hit show *Forged in Fire* and to some degree its spinoff, *Knife or Death*.

According to Shannon Edginton of Knife and Gun Finishing Supplies (K&G), K&G tries to cater to the newcomers that are building forges in their backyards and heating their first billets of steel. "A lot of people are just trying it and trying to figure it out," she said. To that end, the shop's most popular steel offering is the classic 1080 high carbon steel.

Tanner Hartigan, who fulfills orders at K&G and "dabbles" in knifemaking, said 1080 is great for novice smiths because of the fine edge it creates and its inexpensive cost. "I sell to a lot of hunters over in New Mexico and it's easier for them to sharpen 'em in the field," Hartigan said of 1080 blades. "But they still hold a really good edge."

If a 1080 blade is damaged in the shop—the blade cracks in heat treat, the grinder slips—then it's not dozens of dollars that go on the scrap heap.

"It's a little more forgiving in the heat-treat process," Hartigan said. "Steels like 1095, if you don't get it directly from the oven to the oil within



Scott Devanna said another stainless steel grade introduced around 15 years ago experiencing a resurgence goes by several different names, including CTS 204P, 20CV and M390. The blade of Michael Raymond's framelock folder is M390.

"The customer feedback on this steel has been phenomenal," Jantz Supply's Shanna Kemp said of RWL-34, "especially among folder makers." Sweden's Anders Hedlund uses the stainless steel for the 2-inch blade of his heavily engraved and fileworked art folder. (SharpByCoop image)



about a second or so, you lose a lot of the hardness of the blade. With 1080, on the other hand, you have a couple seconds where you can fiddle around for a minute and then get it into the oil and it will still harden."

The most recent steel K&G added to its lineup is a powdered 1084 and powdered pure nickel—ideal for making mosaic damascus for the smith willing to experiment more.

LOOKS and PERFORMANCE

Shanna Kemp, Jantz Supply marketing manager, said Jantz stocks most of the stainless and high-carbon steels sourced from U.S. mills, "which we think is very important for quality and consistency between lots."

"Custom knifemakers are constantly on the lookout for different alloys that allow them to achieve different results than other makers," Kemp confided in an e-mail. "The trends that develop will rely greatly on what becomes available through new metallurgy technology."

For now, she said it's the aesthetics of the metal that is driving a lot of makers' choices.

"[We] also carry a strong line of damascus in carbon and stainless as well as Damasteel, the stainless patterned steel from Sweden," she stated. "The use of Damasteel [damascus] keeps growing at a rapid pace, and we don't see this trend going away anytime soon. Damasteel's use of powder metal to create its stainless patterned steel provides a purity and consistency that is hard to attain using traditional forge-welding methods."

The trend carries over to non-

damascus steel as well. Thanks to micron-level finishing belts and sandpaper, makers are able to meet the rising demand for mirror-polished blades. And for that, Kemp noted, makers are turning to some classic blade steels.

"CPM 154, which is a derivative of 154CM using powder metal technology, is a USA-made steel that achieves this goal," she advised. "[The] primary advantage of CPM 154 over 154CM is

the workability of the steel."

Damasteel also has jumped on the trend, offering RWL-34, a kind of improved, powder-metallurgical grade of ATS-34/a clean version of 154CM. "The customer feedback on this steel has been phenomenal," Kemp said of RWL-34, "especially among folder makers."

IN SEARCH of SHARP

Terry Summers, vice president of Admiral Steel, said his most popular



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Popularized by BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Bob Loveless circa 1980, 154CM remains a stainless steel a number of custom knifemakers use, including Michael J. Daly for his tactical utility tanto designed by Val Rosas. (SharpByCoop image)

blade steels are the classics. Makers use his 1095 high-carbon steel for large bowies. Stainless steels 440C and 154CM are standards, and also are used by makers who are just starting out. For high-end blades, it's CPM 154.

"What I've found," Summers observed, "especially with custom knifemakers, they're always ready to try something else, but it seems in most cases they tend to [return] to what they've been dealing with right along because they're comfortable with it."

Summers said he's gotten more calls asking about CPM 3V. It's a carbon steel he describes as a "super 1080." Because

some extra vanadium and molybdenum are added to the alloy, it toughens the steel. But no one has yet to make an ultimate steel, Summers pointed out, and new steel varieties emphasize various steel features.

"It's just a matter of putzing around, adding this element to make this or to make it a little harder, or a little stronger," Summers explained. "But

what usually happens when you tinker around in one area, you're giving something away in another area. If the finish is nice, then maybe it doesn't hold an edge nice.

"That's why you get a lot of 'em that are the latest, hottest things for this or for that, and then all of a sudden you don't hear about that specific grade much anymore. Nobody has come out with the super steel that's better than everything else yet," he chuckled. "Different grades are good for different things."

But it doesn't stop a knifemaker from searching.

**According to Per Jarbelius of Damasteel, first made by Damasteel in 1995, RWL-34 has been more popular among makers in Europe than the USA. However, that could be changing because Damasteel is now making RWL-34 in sheet form in addition to bar form, the former easier to cut out for use as blades.*

For the contact information for the sources in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 81.

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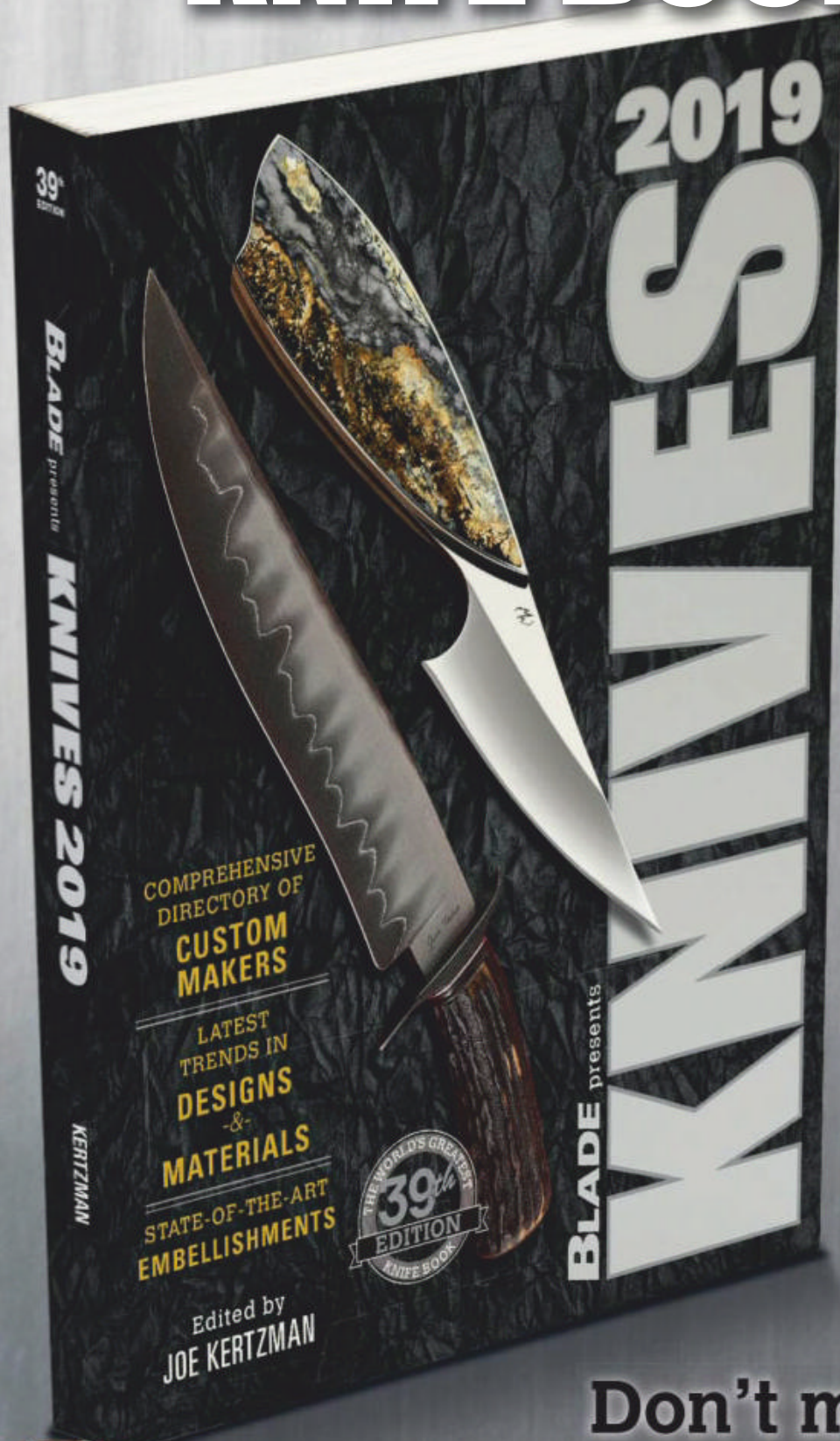
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According to the author, the sawback of the Gerber Compact Clearpath was the next most effective behind the Cold Steel Latin Machete 18 inch. It went right through limbs and saplings in a highly satisfactory manner.

TOTALLY SAWSOME

SAWBACK KNIVES MUST BE ABLE TO PERFORM
DIFFERENT JOBS IN DIFFERENT WAYS



We rounded up four of the latest sawback knives to see which ones both saw and chop/whittle well. One thing to consider when choosing the ideal sawback knife is the handle. Since you must orient the knife upside down when using it as a saw, the handle must feel comfortable both in the conventional orientation and upside down, too. As you might guess, many handles that feel great in a standard grip feel horrible when used upside down. Got your attention yet?

DUAL-PURPOSE PORTABLE

The Compact Clearpath joins Gerber's extensive line of machetes as perhaps the company's most portable entry. The 11-inch blade of 7CrMoV stainless steel is mated with an ergonomic handle of a dual-molded composition. Gerber's GatorGrip texturing pattern provides an all-weather handle surface that is very secure with or without gloves. The black rubber handle is accented by an orange plastic bolster and lanyard ring. The orange is a good idea, as it stands out easily if you drop the machete amongst leaves, etc., while in the woods.

With its rounded profile, pronounced finger-indexing recess and double integral guard, the grip filled my hand very well. It all translates to excellent shock mitigation in use. The blade is ground evenly and





The sawback section of the Cold Steel Latin Machete Plus 18 inch proved the most efficient of the bunch. Yes, size does matter. According to the author, the knife's performance was akin to a full-size bow-saw.



Sawing with the SOGfari Tanto Machete proved fruitful and useful. Though the teeth tended to load up with sawdust, the author detected no decrease in performance as he was able to almost effortlessly saw limbs and saplings.



Dexter Ewing

HOW TO SHARPEN ANY KNIFE, THE SEQUEL

BLADE® field editor Dexter Ewing will reprise his class “How To Sharpen Any Knife”—and do one class each on show Friday and Saturday—during the 6th Annual BLADE University held in conjunction with BLADE Show 2019 June 7-9 at the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta.

Dexter will demonstrate how to sharpen different blade shapes, plain, serrated and combo edges, kitchen knives, tactical and outdoor blades of high-performance steels, and more. For more information visit bladeshow.com.

had a good edge out of the box. However, the sharpness was lacking so I wound up sharpening it to my liking. It was rather easy to do, so the knife can be easily maintained in the field if necessary.

The Compact Clearpath is agile in the hand and can be used for whittling. While it lacks the reach of longer models, it still has machete cutting power and the ability to take down vegetation and chop saplings.

The sawback section proved an effective dual-use tool. The sawteeth are ground very well and bit aggressively into wood. They didn't load up with sawdust either, an indication the teeth have good geometry. The handle felt just as comfortable using the saw as the plain edge. Overall, the Compact Clearpath is very well made. I would



The size of the Compact Clearpath from Gerber lends the machete a condensed form combined with light weight. It carries comfortably without weighing you down.

suggest Gerber pay more attention to the edge quality, providing more of a useful sharp edge than just a mediocre one—the latter which can be dangerous at best.

The accompanying sheath is plastic-lined ballistic nylon fabric. A single sewn

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The Outdoor Edge Saberback Bowie was a devastating chopper due to its primary blade grinds and exceptional edge geometry.

loop allows for belt carry. A nylon retention strap secures by a fabric fastener to keep the blade secured in the sheath. MSRP: \$31.94.

DEVASTATING CHOPPER

Outdoor Edge has a couple of collaborations with knifemaker Jerry Hossom applicable to this story. First was the Brush Demon recurve machete and its follow-up, the Saberback Bowie. The latter offers the same cutting power as the larger Brush Demon but in a more compact package. Like the Brush Demon the Saberback Bowie blade uses 65Mn carbon steel, which offers a good balance of edge retention and sharpening ease. The Saberback Bowie also offers a sawback section on the spine of its 10.25-inch blade. The recurve edge helps make the knife an effective chopping tool, as it went through a variety of test materials with aplomb.

Molded of thermoplastic rubber, the handle is a pure Hossom design as well. One of the things he's known for is ergonomic handle designs that cradle the hand, instilling user confidence and cutting power while retaining an ultra-secure grip in all weather conditions. In mid-handle is a generous palm swell that helps fill the hand and stabilizes the knife in use. The rubberized handle is excellent at shock absorption during chopping.

The Saberback Bowie comes with a nice ballistic nylon sheath of a sewn-and-riveted construction. It is plastic lined for rigidity and to protect the blade. The dual-purpose belt loop can be released and dropped down, allowing the sheath to ride lower should you prefer. Securing the knife are two button-snap retention straps. The sheath is very well constructed and thought out.

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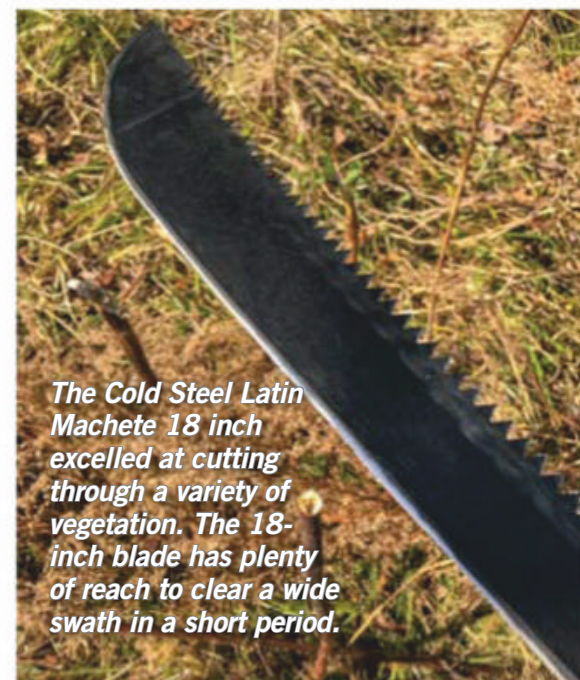
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The Cold Steel Latin Machete 18 inch excelled at cutting through a variety of vegetation. The 18-inch blade has plenty of reach to clear a wide swath in a short period.

The knife is very impressive as a chopping tool. In fact, its chopping power is devastating! It makes wood chips fly every time. The sawback section is a different story. Its total length is just less than 4 inches. The pronounced false edge limits the length of the run of sawteeth. Consequently, the sawteeth were ineffective since they limit the length of the sawing stroke. The double-cut sawteeth did an OK job at evacuating sawdust. The Saberback Bowie is much better at chopping than sawing. I would recommend that Outdoor Edge eliminate the sawback section.

The handle is spot-on. The bird's-beak rear pommel catches your pinky. As you chop, centrifugal force tends to pull the knife away from your grasp. The bird's-beak pommel negates this by pressing itself into your hand, further securing the knife in your grasp.

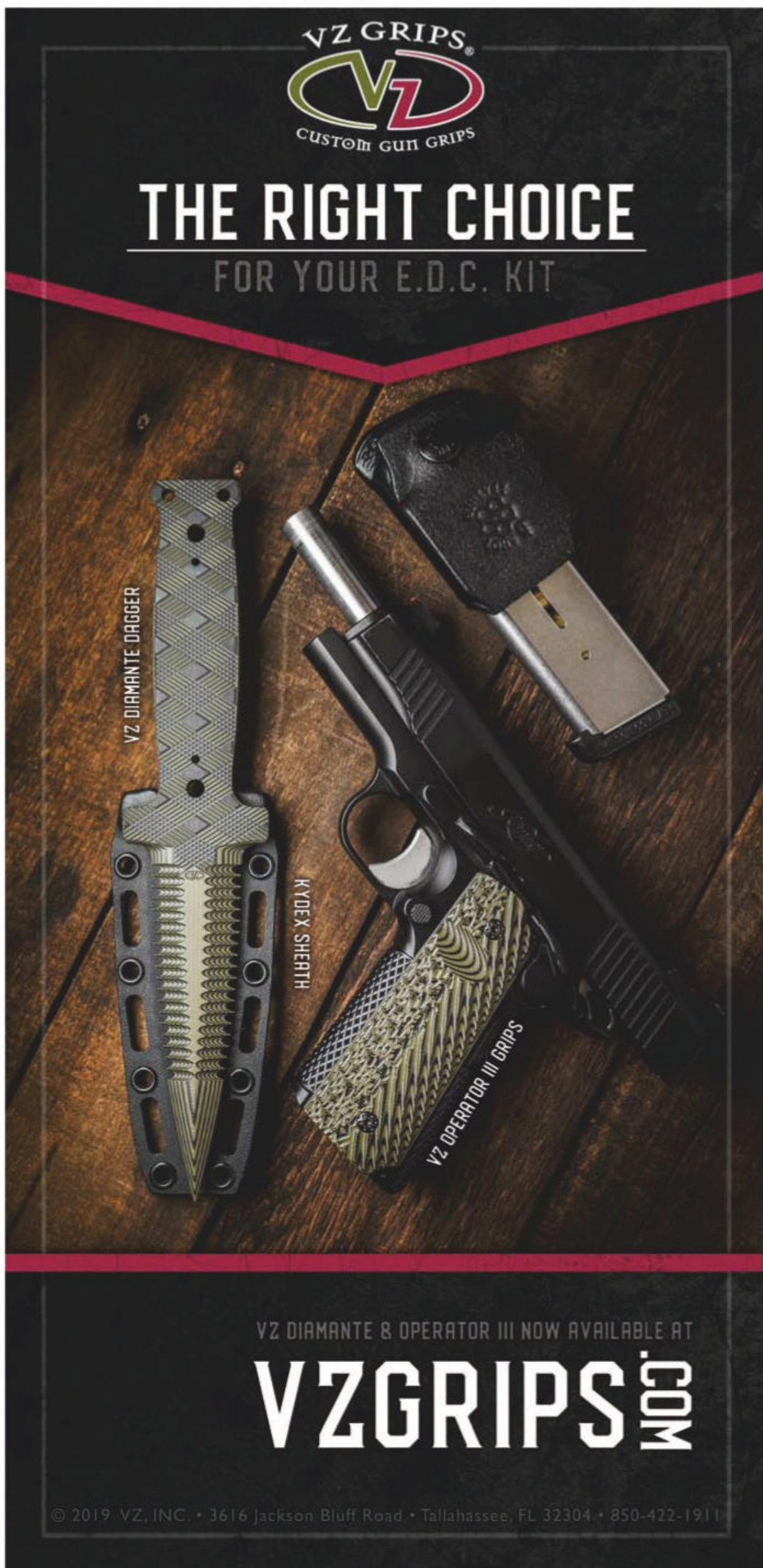
At only 13.7 ounces, the Saberback is agile so you can use it for extended periods without your hand tiring out. The bird's-beak pommel tended to poke into my wrist during sawing but otherwise felt comfortable. It was the most impressive chopper of the bunch given its light weight and superior edge geometry. MSRP: \$69.95.

SAW and CHOP

The SOGfari Tanto Machete is the most compact of the test sawback knives. The interesting 10-inch tanto/machete blade combo is paired with a sawback for extra cutting utility. Not commonly seen on machetes, the sharpened tanto tip promotes more control with intricate cutting or whittling chores. The blade is 3Cr13 stainless steel with a black epoxy powder coat for added corrosion resistance and low glare.

The molded hard rubber handle is ergonomically shaped, and incorporates forward and rear guards to keep the hand in place. The contoured edges ensure comfort and the mild surface texturing adds a good non-slip quality. Exposed at the end of the handle, the spiked tang can be used for pounding or scraping. Three handle holes provide locations for threading a paracord lanyard (not included) through for additional user security. The knife's compact nature is great for storage in the cab of your truck, tractor, ATV or UTV.

Despite its compact size, the knife is effective in use. While it lacks the reach of the larger test blades, it makes up for it in



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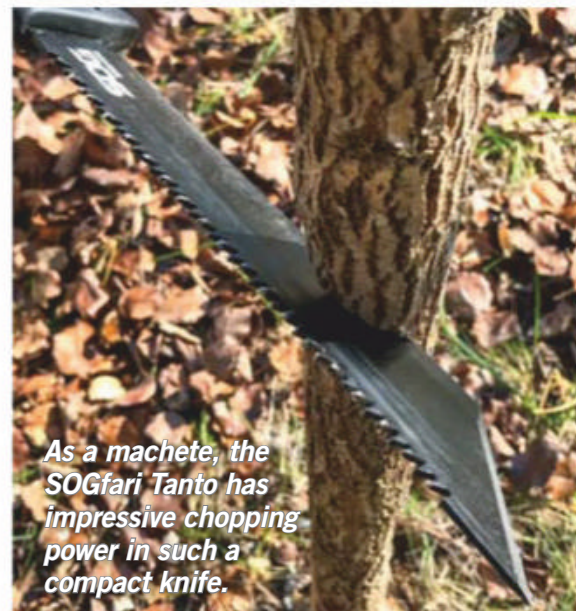


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SAWTOOTH BLADES |



As a machete, the SOGfari Tanto has impressive chopping power in such a compact knife.

cutting ability and power. The main cutting edge bit into green vegetation easily, and saplings and limbs as well. However, this is where longer/heavier blades have the advantage due to mass and inertia. With the SOGfari your swings must be more deliberate in power and accuracy. There is a delicate give-and-take you must strike when designing a compact chopping tool.

Having an 8-inch run of sawteeth on a 10-inch blade is a great ratio. Sawing with the SOGfari proved effective and useful. Though the teeth tended to load up with sawdust, I detected no decrease in performance as I was able to easily saw limbs and saplings.

The handle is comfortable to use upside down in sawtooth mode, with no slippage. Like with the Outdoor Edge Saberback Bowie, the rear guard/bird's-beak handle butt negates the centrifugal force of swinging by forcing the handle into your grasp for a more secure hold. I find the design feature very desirable in large fixed blades and wish more manufacturers would follow suit.

The sheath is ballistic nylon with a plastic liner. It is a one-piece, fold-over, sewn and riveted design. You can't get any simpler than that and it works as it should. A loop sewn on the back allows belt carry.

Like the Gerber Compact Clearpath, I had to sharpen the SOGfari Tanto Machete prior to use as the out-of-the box edge was not to my satisfaction. Other than that, the SOGfari fits the bill for a compact chopping tool with the added versatility of a sawback. MSRP: \$29.

LONGEST SAWTEETH

The machetes in Cold Steel's South Africa-made line are inexpensive, but don't let that

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Mammoth by Cliff Parker

fool you. They are basic in construction and good overall. They have no flash or bells and whistles—they just work.

The company's Latin Machete Plus comes in sawback versions: 18- and 24-inch blades. We tested the 18, a length that, in my opinion, has the best sweet spot for chopping. Anything longer begins to feel a bit unwieldy to the point where you must sacrifice control, and with machetes it's all about control. The blade is 1055 carbon steel with a black powder coat. The molded polypropylene handle has checkered texturing for grip enhancement, and rounded contours make for a very comfortable hold.

The sawteeth are the biggest of the group and definitely will withstand heavy use/abuse. Out of the box the knife has a very basic edge, so expect to do some pre-use sharpening. Once able to grind a good edge on it, I felt more confident. The carbon steel sharpened fast.

In the woods it excelled as both a machete and a saw. There is about a 14-inch run of sawteeth on the blade. It is by far the longest run of sawteeth of the bunch. This allows you to put full strokes to good use. The performance is akin to a full-size bow saw. It made short work of limbs and saplings several inches in diameter. The teeth are sharp too—no need to apply more pressure than usual to make them work. And the machete performance was top notch. The sharp edge bit deep into vegetation.

The molded polypropylene handle proved very comfortable and secure used in either the machete or sawback mode. It fills your grip well and shock mitigation is excellent.

The sheath is heavy-duty ballistic nylon. It has a sewn-and-riveted construction style, with one side a flap closure secured by a series of snaps. I withdrew and inserted the blade in the traditional manner without issue. A very nice touch is the sheath bottom

reinforced with hard plastic to prevent the blade tip from puncturing it. MSRP: \$35.99.

For the contact information for the knives in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 81.

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RELY
ON YOU



A Matt Diskin design, the Kershaw Deadline is another modern pattern integrating a modified wharncliffe blade into an all-around utility EDC knife.

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT

UP-TO-THE-MINUTE VERSIONS OF THE WHARNCLIFFE BLADE WILL CUT FOR YOU

CASE SWAY BACK GENT

Designer: Tony Bose

Blade length: 2.8"

Blade material: Mirror-polished
Tru-Sharp™ surgical steel*

Handle material: Exotic green
malachite, mother-of-pearl and jet

Weight: 2.2 ozs.

Closed length: 3.19"

MSRP: \$368.99

**Case's version of 420HC stainless*

There are lots of blade shapes on the market, most of which are earmarked for a specific intended use. Clip points, drop points, recurves, hawkbills and more all have their own set of inherent advantages. However, the original intended uses of specific blade shapes tend to evolve over time as end uses change, and the blade shapes are modified to suit modern applications.

The straight-edged blade—an edge that is one straight line from choil to tip—is no exception. Whether a wharncliffe, sheepfoot or some other variation, the end uses are experiencing the same kind of transformation from traditional to modern/specialized—and even modern/stylized.

INDUSTRY STAPLE

When it comes to traditional pocketknives, Case practically lives in the space. Its selections have helped ensure that slip joints and nail-nicks

"The wharncliffe blade, at least from a Case standpoint, is a great performer because it's so versatile," explained Fred Feightner, communications manager for W.R. Case & Sons. The Case Sway Back Gent is a Tony Bose design.



never completely left the scene, despite the overwhelming popularity of tactical knives and the market's ever-evolving array of opening and locking mechanisms. Also, having renowned custom knifemaker Tony Bose as a design partner ensures that at Case, "traditional" isn't just another word for "repetitious."

Thanks in part to Case, the original configurations of straight-edge blades remain an industry staple. One fantastic example is Case and Bose's collaboration, the Sway Back Gent, which features a wharncliffe blade.

"The wharncliffe blade, at least from a Case standpoint, is a great performer

because it's so versatile," explained Fred Feightner, the company's communications manager. "The long, straight edge gives the user a sure cut because the blade can be held at one angle throughout the cut." He added that the blade spine's gradual taper

CRKT RAIKIRI

Designer: Dew Hara

Blade length: 3.759"

Blade steel: 1.4116 stainless

Handle material: ADC12 aluminum

Weight: 5 ozs.

Closed length: 5.112"

MSRP: \$99.99



Designed by Dew Hara, the CRKT Raikiri features a full straight-line modified wharncliffe blade that was inspired by Japanese sword design.



A Michael Janich design, the Spyderco Yojimbo 2 is the second generation of the original Yojimbo, which helped introduce the straight-edged wharncliffe blade to the world of tactical folders.



Lots of curves, a gimped blade ramp and flipper tab, and a deep-carry pocket clip for low pocket carry help highlight the Kershaw Deadline.

KERSHAW DEADLINE

Designer: Matt Diskin

Blade length: 3.25"

Blade steel: 8Cr13MoV stainless

Blade finish: Titanium carbo-nitride coating, satin flats

Handle material: Glass-filled nylon, rubberized insert

Weight: 4.6 ozs.

Closed length: 4.25"

MSRP: \$52.49

gives the user a long, sharp point great for making small, targeted cuts, as well as for digging, piercing, puncturing and poking.

Due to having a single blade, the Sway Back Gent is slimmer than its double-blade sibling, the Sway Back Jack. As the name attests, the former is intended to be a gent's knife, so naturally it should be a bit more discreet in the pocket.

"It was Tony's wish to find a knife pattern we could collaborate on, which would be an everyday carry knife that

SPYDERCO YOJIMBO 2

Designer: Michael Janich

Blade length: 3.11"

Blade steel: CPM S30V stainless

Handle material: G-10

Weight: 4 ozs.

Closed length: 4.51"

MSRP: \$216



The Raikiri features CRKT's Field Strip technology created by BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall Of Fame® member Ken Onion, which allows the knife to be quickly disassembled without the need of any tools for quick cleaning.

**"THE BLADE CAN BE
HELD AT ONE ANGLE
THROUGHOUT THE CUT."**

— **FRED FEIGHTNER**

could perform a variety of tasks without taking up much space in the pocket," Feightner continued. "The curved shape of the handle makes the knife more ergonomic for the user."

The addition of the beautiful, deep-green malachite for the handle added value and a "bling" factor that Feightner indicated has delighted collectors. The knife is available in a variety of handle material choices and price points.

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BLADE SHAPES |



Green malachite, mother-of-pearl and jet complete the handle of the Case Sway Back Gent, the shape of which helps explain the knife's name.

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the concept of tradition is the Raikiri, a collaboration between CRKT and second-generation Japanese knifemaker Dew Hara. Raikiri, which means *thunder cutter* in Japanese, is a full straight-line modified wharncliffe inspired by Japanese sword design. In his explanation Hara references *iaido*, which is a sword form of martial arts that emphasizes very rapid deployment.

"The handle design pays homage to the original legend of the Raikiri sword, and in Dew's words the pattern wraps around like a sword meeting lightning," explained CRKT spokesman Mike May. Not to be confused with anime references, the original Raikiri sword is housed in the Tachibana Museum in Yanagawa, Japan.

May said the Raikiri is designed to be a portable utility knife that can be worn anywhere. Aside from its stylistic characteristics, the modified wharncliffe shape makes the blade

nimble and strong. The 1.4116 stainless steel common to kitchen and Swiss Army knives makes the Raikiri's blade very resistant to corrosion and easy to sharpen.

The folder is large enough for solid chores but small enough to be a practical EDC. It features a low-profile detent flipper for "lightning fast" deployment and a low-carry pocket clip for discreet carry. "It's also worth noting," May added, "through this process we [Hara and CRKT] jointly decided that [CRKT's] Field Strip technology would be a great addition to the final product, so we added that in along the way."

Field Strip technology was created by BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall Of Fame® member Ken Onion. It allows the knife to be quickly disassembled for quick cleaning without the need of any tools. "We're very pleased with the end result," May concluded, "and more importantly this design really resonates with consumers."



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BLADE SHAPES |



Nested stainless steel liners provide structural strength and form the backbone of the Yojimbo 2's compression lock mechanism. The pocket clip is four position and the initials in cursive on the blade are those of the designer, Michael Janich.

TUNED DETENT SYSTEM

Designed by maker Matt Diskin, the Kershaw Deadline is another modern pattern integrating a modified wharncliffe blade into an all-around EDC knife. A designer for Kershaw and Zero Tolerance Knives, Jim MacNair explained that the company brain trust chose a modified wharncliffe with a top swedge because of its versatility.

"It's meant to be a general utility knife for all types of tasks," he said. "It's excellent for opening boxes and breaking down cardboard packaging. The fine tip is also very good for detailed cutting—like cutting curved lines in paper. It also cuts rope and cord well, carves wood, and can even be used for food prep."

The Deadline includes many modern features, such as a two-toned finish

on the blade and handle, a low-slung pocket clip for discreet carry, and the KVT ball-bearing system with the new Tuned Detent System. MacNair explained the latter.

"The detent is controlled by a separate bar in the front of the handle," he began. "This is like a separate linerlock, but it's simply a bar with a detent ball that engages a hole in the front of the blade instead of the back. This allows you to set the strength of the lockbar independent of the detent."

"A WHARNCLIFFE PROVIDES THE MAXIMUM CUTTING DEPTH AND PERFORMANCE FROM SHORT-BLADED KNIVES."

— JIM MACNAIR

ACUTE POINT

Leave it to Spyderco's Michael Janich to bring specified function to a knife design. A designer and personal self-defense instructor, Janich explained that his inspiration for the Spyderco Yojimbo 2 is directly related to hand-to-hand combat.

"In a self-defense situation you will fight with the knife you actually carry, which will be something small and legally permissible," Janich explained. "A wharncliffe provides the maximum cutting depth and performance from short-bladed knives."

The Yojimbo 2 is the second generation of the original Yojimbo, which helped introduce the straight-edged wharncliffe blade to the world of tactical folders. "From a personal-defense perspective, my Martial Blade Concepts [MBC] system focuses on cutting anatomical targets that quickly disable an attacker," Janich shared.

The acute point of a wharncliffe blade offers outstanding penetration, and the straight edge takes the cutting power all the way to the point, he added.

Meanwhile, the ramped blade spine can be used to help push the cutting edge down into the intended target to shear along its length.

From a utilitarian standpoint, he said the wharncliffe also allows you to cut with extreme power at the heel of the edge while still offering scalpel-like precision at the point. "Although [the tip] is admittedly weaker than the points of other blade shapes," he said, "if you know the difference between a knife and a screwdriver, you shouldn't have a problem."

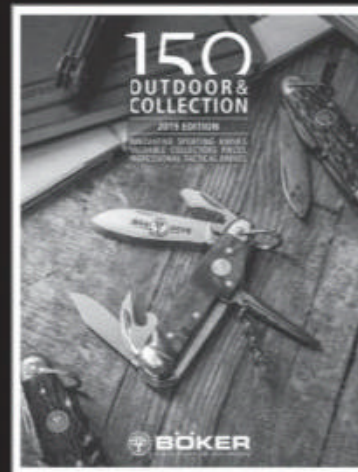
For the contact information for the knives in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 81.

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METAL-HANDLE HOTTIES

ANTIQUE ADVERTISING POCKETKNIVES CELEBRATE A COLLECTING RENAISSANCE



Though most shoe advertising knives are plain, one stands out. It showcases a revolutionary “shoe last” boot heel that features the sole of a boot bent up at an abrupt angle by a person’s hand. The German cutlery concern of United Cutlery Co. (no relation to today’s United Cutlery based in Moultrie, Georgia) made the stamped aluminum advertising knife circa 1920 for F.P. Kirkendall & Co., a boot maker in Omaha, Nebraska.

In the past couple of years, there appears to have been a resurgence in old-time advertising knives among collectors of vintage cutlery. Two reasons for the upswing include original collections have come available through estate sales, and collectors interested in historical knives are realizing the value of early advertiser pieces.

Advertising knives were perhaps the most perfect retail “giveaway.” Most everyone carried pocketknives back in the day and used them for a myriad of chores. From a marketing point of view, the advertising printed or engraved on such knives constantly reminded the user of the product being touted.

To make the advertising pocketknife even more useful, some installed specialized blades/tools in the knife itself. The specialized blades/tools included can openers, fingernail files, leather punches, scissors and cuticle removers. The modifications helped ensure that the knife would be in a pocket along with a wallet, keys, etc.

For knife collectors, any old piece with advertising printed or silk screened on the plastic sides won’t do. Like most other pocketknives, those well made by well-known cutlery companies command the highest interest and value. Advertising knife collectors prefer pocketknives with metal handles embossed or engraved with a company slogan, name and location. Many such knives are approaching 100 years old since they were produced, with specimens sporting full blades being most important to collectors.

Collectors also place importance on knives that advertised iconic American products or, even better, products that no longer exist. A knife advertising asbestos or Dupont dynamite is sure to attract a collector following. A knife promoting Stetson hats not only appeals to collectors of advertising cutlery, but also collectors of Americana or Western clothing, making it a “cross collectible.”

Many advertising knives focus on two or three consumer products popular to a specific era. Shoe advertising was popular, with Star Brand Shoes and Poll-Parrot ads often seen on knives. Generally, the knives were given to customers who bought specific shoe brands. Though most shoe advertising

Goodyear introduced balloon tires in 1923, and the iconic, double-sided, two-blade penknife made by Germany's E. Bonsmann Cutlery Co., is one of the most desirable and collectible of advertising knives



ADVERTISING KNIFE VALUES*

Advertiser, Knife, Manufacturer	Value
Home Insurance Co., 2 blade & scissors, J. Mergott Co.....	\$45-\$55
Good Roads Machinery Co., fancy scrollwork 2 blade, D. Peres.....	\$50-\$65
E.H. Best and Co., Woolens and Felts, fancy aluminum, Schrade Cutlery	\$50-\$65
Goodwill Shoes, shoe-sole-shaped figural, Lunawerk Cutlery	\$75-\$100
Peters Solid Leather Shoes, 2 blade, plain w/engraved name.....	\$35-\$40
Henry Disston and Sons “made from saw steel,” plain w/engraved name	\$45-\$55
Nobel-Glasgow Explosives, 2 blade w/engraved name, “unique” product.....	\$60-\$70
J.L. Kraft, Miracle Whip, 4th anniversary, 2 blade, Schrade Cutlery.....	\$55-\$60
Metropolitan Life Insurance Building, 3D graphics, A. Kastor & Bros.....	\$125-\$160
Woolworth Building, 3D graphics, aluminum, 2 blade, Korten & Scherf	\$60-\$70
Linz Bros. Jewelry, 3D graphics, Linz Bros. store, Dallas, W.H. Morley & Son.....	\$100-\$125
Simonds, Warden, Whit Col, fancy brass w/lettering, 2 blade.....	\$75-\$100
Apollinaris-Apenta, fancy lettering, scrollwork, “unique” product, Paul Henckels	\$125-\$150
Geo. G. Magai, Clothing & Furnishings, fancy scrollwork, printing, H. Keschner	\$125-\$150
Voigt-Cazeres Co., “Simply Show the Knife” slogan, A.W. Williams	\$150-\$175
Boyles Bros. Co., “A Knife With Every Suit” slogan, H. Keschner.....	\$150-\$200
Goodyear Balloon Tire, tire figural, extremely rare, E. Bonsmann Co.	\$200-\$250
Coca-Cola Bottling Co, very collectible product, 2 blade	\$50-\$75
F.P. Kirkendall Shoe Co., “Electric Welts for Style” 3D graphics, United Cutlery	\$225-\$275
J.J. Stiller, Tailor, Chicago, fancy scrollwork, printing, H. Keschner Co.	\$125-\$135
The Kendrick-Bellamy Co., Art, Books, Denver fancy scrollwork, H. Keschner	\$125-\$140

**Author’s values for knives in very good to excellent condition with full blades and good snap. No broken blades. Values decrease at least 50 percent for knives with obvious defects in the blades and/or handles.*

Examples of architectural advertising knives include those for, from left: the Linz Jewelry Co., Dallas, Texas; the Woolworth Building, New York City; American United Life Insurance Building, Indianapolis, Indiana; and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building, New York City.



knives are plain, one stands out. It showcases a revolutionary “shoe last” boot heel that features the sole of a boot bent up at an abrupt angle by a person’s hand. Surrounding the “bent boot” is the slogan “Electric Welts For Style And Service.” The German cutlery concern of United Cutlery Co. (no relation to today’s United Cutlery based in Moultrie, Georgia) made the stamped aluminum advertising knife for F.P. Kirkendall & Co., a boot maker in Omaha, Nebraska, circa 1920. Advertising knives promoting clothing and wine or spirits also were numerous.

Some advertising knives approached the three-dimensional realm by including renderings of architecture. A staple of the genre is an advertising knife made for Linz Bros. Jewelers of Dallas, Texas. The Linz Bros. Jewelry Building is prominently displayed in raised relief on the handle as an unmistakable Dallas icon. Another iconic three-dimensional advertising knife carried the words, “Compliments of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, New York.” This



According to the author, this advertising knife with its depiction of a shoe sole for Goodwill Shoes is immensely popular among collectors.

gorgeous knife features New York City's Metropolitan Life Building Tower, which at one time was the "highest building in the world." (Author's note: The 11-story Metropolitan Life Insurance Building was the world's tallest building from 1909 until 1913, when it was eclipsed by New York's 792-foot-high Woolworth Building.) This helps date the production of the knife during this four-year time period. The German cutlery company of A. Kastor and Sons was the maker.

Another example is an advertising knife made for American United Life Insurance Co. It features a picture of the company's headquarters building on the reverse side. Another is for the Eagle Rolling Mill Company, New Ulm, Minnesota, which boasts a detailed depiction of a massive rolling mill plant. The plant depiction is so detailed you can see railcars below the massive production facility, as well as huge cranes towering above it.

A knife with a handle shaped like a tire advertising "Goodyear All-Weather



Metal-handle advertising knives marketed a wide range of products, including but not limited to bridges, asbestos, insurance, saw blades, shoes and flour.



The author stated this is the only "hat" advertising knife he's seen. Jack Keeshan is discussed in the 1917 issue of The American Hatter magazine.



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H. Keschner Cutlery Co., of Solingen, Germany, made many clothier advertising knives with stamped brass handles and scrollwork around the blade pins. Recent values for such knives with significant blade wear have risen above \$125 each.

Balloon Tires” would be the centerpiece of any advertising knife collection. Goodyear introduced balloon tires in 1923, and the iconic, double-sided, two-blade penknife made by Germany’s E. Bonsmann Cutlery Co., is one of the most desirable and collectible advertising knives ever. Another highly decorated, double-sided advertising knife promotes a Hungarian bitter

water favored by Germans as the “Queen of Table Waters.” The knife has large, ornate scrollwork on each end and bold letters raised above a pebbled background. Such knives almost always were made by Germany cutlery companies.

7 COLLECTOR KEYS

What separates sought-after advertising

knives from “ordinary” ones, and which ones are most likely to appreciate in value? The characteristics of such knives include the following:

1: They are almost always produced by well-known cutlery companies, frequently German, including Paul A. Henckels, D. Peres, M. Wormser, H. Keschner, United Cutlery, E. Bonsmann, Lunawerk, Albert Lyman and Co., and W.H. Morley and Sons. Such outfits were experts in producing excellent knives, with uncommon advertising deeply stamped on the metal sides.

2: Almost all rare and remarkable advertising knives are metal handled. Because the knives were metal handled, they last for many years without cracking or breaking as plastic-sided knives were prone to do.

3: The knives are extremely ornate with fancy scrollwork, pebbled backgrounds, high-relief lettering and fleur-de-lis figuring at each end. Generally, the more ornate the designs, the higher the value.

4: The knives often advertise unusual products, such as Hungarian bitter water, dynamite, asbestos products, saw steel, or long-lasting shoe soles.

5: Like almost every other collectible knife, overall condition determines a portion of the value. It’s tough to display, or even buy, an advertising knife that has broken or extremely worn blades with no snap. Though some



A highly decorated, double-sided advertising knife made circa 1920-30 promotes a Hungarian bitter water favored by Germans as the “Queen of Table Waters.” The knife has large, ornate scrollwork on each end and bold letters raised above a pebbled background. Such knives almost always were made by Germany cutlery companies.

serous collectors may sometimes buy rare advertising knives with noticeable defects, the defects always affect value.

6: Those notably configured are highly sought after. Examples, aka figural knives, include those shaped like shoes, tires, cars, airplanes, etc.

7: Many provide unusual insight into the milieu and lifestyle of those who lived in the 1920s or who survived the Great Depression.

Advertising knives promoting the clothing of the time period are coveted. One example holds a special place and was the reason this writer began researching them. Made by the H. Keschner Cutlery Co., which used the word “Antelope” as its trademark, the ornately engraved knives advertised a particular clothier. The companies being advertised on such knives are, in my opinion, secondary to the enterprising slogans that appear on them. The engraving on a knife made for the Voight-Cazeres Co., of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, reads “The Holder Of This Knife Will Be Allowed Fifty Cents On Any Man’s Suit Or Overcoat: Simply Show The Knife.” Another example reads “Boyles Bros. Company, ‘A Knife With Every Suit.’” Can you recall a time when showing a pocketknife to a clothier would give you a discount on a suit, or that consumers would be tempted to buy a suit because of the promise on a pocketknife? (A man’s wool suit cost about \$12 during the 1930s, which, adjusted for inflation, is about \$175 today.)

Perhaps it is the sense of history reflected in advertising knives that adds to their value. It could be that collectors of vintage knives are realizing that knives are a worthwhile investment. Maybe it’s a combination of both factors, as collectors see that these knives tell important stories about the development of U.S. products. Whatever the reasons, metal-handle advertising knives are hot again.

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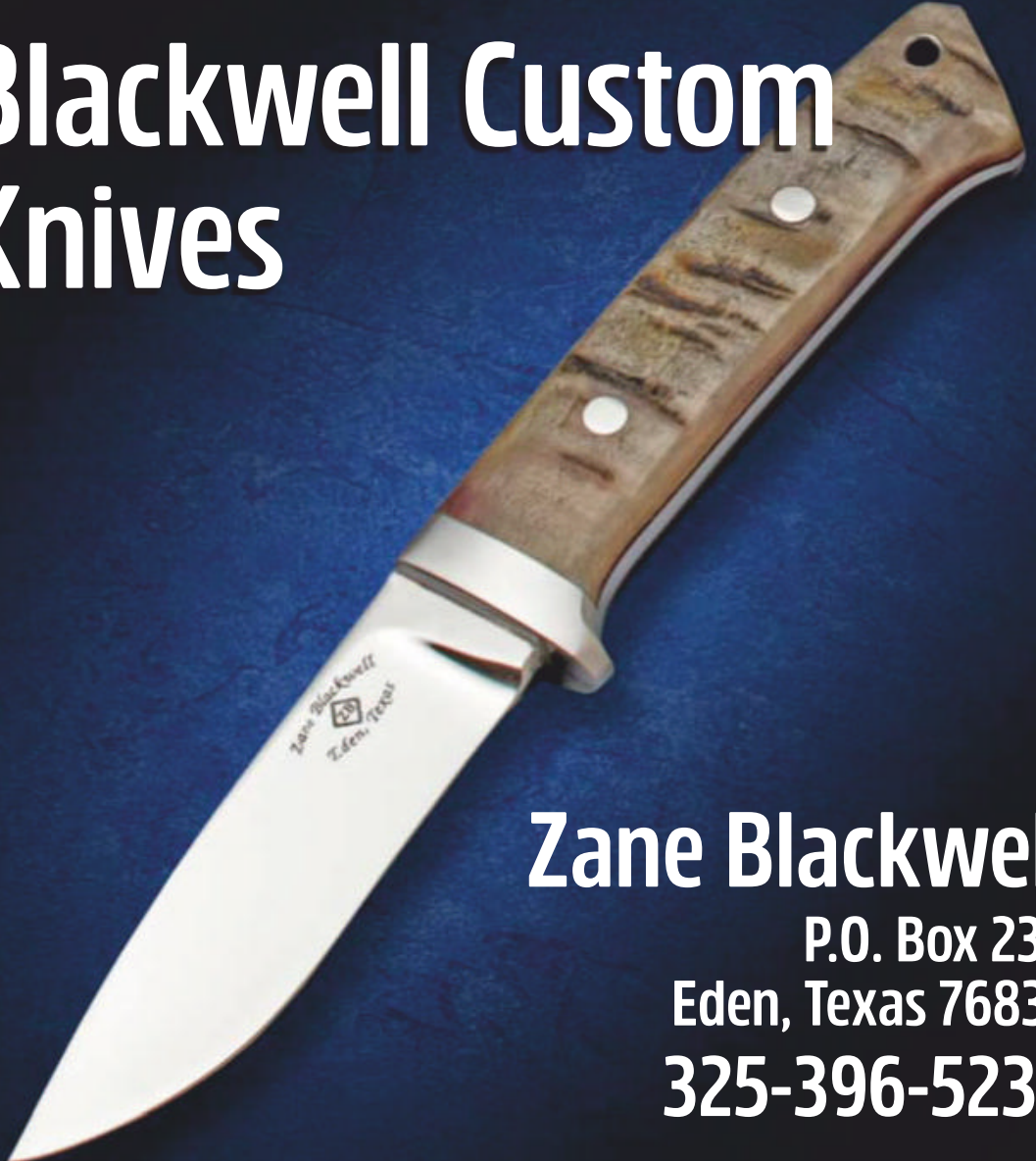
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NASA KNIFE The Case Astronaut Knife M-1 is based on the original model carried on board Apollo 11 during the first landing on the Moon 50 years ago this July 20. Like the original, the machete is lightweight and features sawteeth on the blade spine. The blade's blunt base is for prying and the synthetic handle material is designed to withstand hard impacts without shattering.

50TH ANNIVERSARY ASTRONAUT KNIFE M-1

COMPANY: W.R. Case & Sons
BLADE LENGTH: 11.75 inches
BLADE MATERIAL: 420HC stainless
HANDLE: Smooth white synthetic w/
oversized brass pins
WEIGHT: 10.8 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 17"
MSRP: \$280

AVAILABLE: Second quarter of 2019
SPECIAL STUFF: A special commemorative version (\$480 MSRP) in a limited edition of 250 also will be offered, with themed embellishing on the blade and a wooden shadow display box

SEBENZA 21 CGG LUNAR LANDING

BLADE STEEL: CPM S35VN stainless
ROCKWELL HARDNESS: 56-58 HRC
BLADE THICKNESS: .121"
BLADE GRIND: Hollow
BLADE PATTERN: Drop point
BLADE FINISH: Stonewashed
HANDLE: 6Al4V titanium
HANDLE FINISH: Polished front
HANDLE SETTING: Chrysocolla cabochon
HANDLE ARTWORK: By Kayla Moss
LOCK: Integral Lock
POCKET CLIP: Removable
MSRP: \$575

ONE GIANT LEAP The Sebenza 21 CGG Lunar Landing features artwork by Kayla Moss of the first Apollo Moon landing. The folder comes in the Sebenza's traditional large (3.625-inch blade) and small (2.94-inch blade) sizes. Respective closed lengths and weights: 4.793 inches and 4.7 ounces, and 3.978 inches and 3 ounces.

It was July 20, 1969, a few months shy of half-a-century ago. Apollo 11 received a “go” for “Translunar Injection,” or the mission control OK to blast off for the Moon. Eight days later, astronauts Neil Armstrong and then Buzz Aldrin stepped outside the lunar module and set the first human footsteps on the Moon.

The *Eagle* had landed.

So too have the new factory knives for 2019, including two special models—the Case Astronaut Knife M-1 and the Sebenza 21 CGG Lunar Landing by Chris Reeve Knives—commemorating the 50th anniversary of mankind’s most notable space excursion to date.

In the early 1960s, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) commissioned Case to make the knife that would ultimately be stowed in every manned U.S. spacecraft in the Gemini and Apollo mission series, including Apollo 11. The result was the Case Astronaut Knife M-1. The machete was stowed inside the ship’s Command Module, where it was contained with other essential survival gear. The gear was to be used in the event the capsule splashed down off-course after re-entering Earth orbit. In all, the M-1 traveled to the Moon and back nine times from 1968-1972 as part of NASA’s Apollo program.

The Sebenza 21 CGG Lunar Landing commemorates the 50th anniversary in a specially embellished version of Chris Reeve Knives’ flagship folder. Created by Kayla Moss, the handle artwork depicts the Moon landing, featuring a close-up of an astronaut in the foreground with the American flag he has just planted in the Moon’s surface reflecting from the facemask of his helmet. In the background is the *Eagle* lunar module at left and, setting on the lunar horizon at right, Earth in the form of a stone setting of a blue chrysocolla cabochon.

The Moon-landing commemoratives are a great way to launch the latest factory knives for 2019, some of the best of which are introduced on this and the following pages.

For the contact information for the knives in the story, see “Where To Get ‘Em” on page 81.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more visit blademag.com, **BLADE**’s popular *Instagram* page at [@blademagazine](https://www.instagram.com/blademagazine), and on *Facebook* and *Twitter*.



GET PROVOKED One gentle nudge on the upper crossbar activates the Kinematic mechanism to open the blade while you still maintain a firm grasp on the CRKT Provoke. A lever at the handle’s base unlocks the blade, allowing it to close.

PROVOKE

COMPANY: CRKT

DESIGNER: Joe Caswell

KNIFE PATTERN: Folding karambit

BLADE LENGTH: 4.41"

BLADE STEEL: D2 tool

BLADE PATTERN: Hawkbill

BLADE FINISH: Black PVD coat

BLADE THICKNESS: .21"

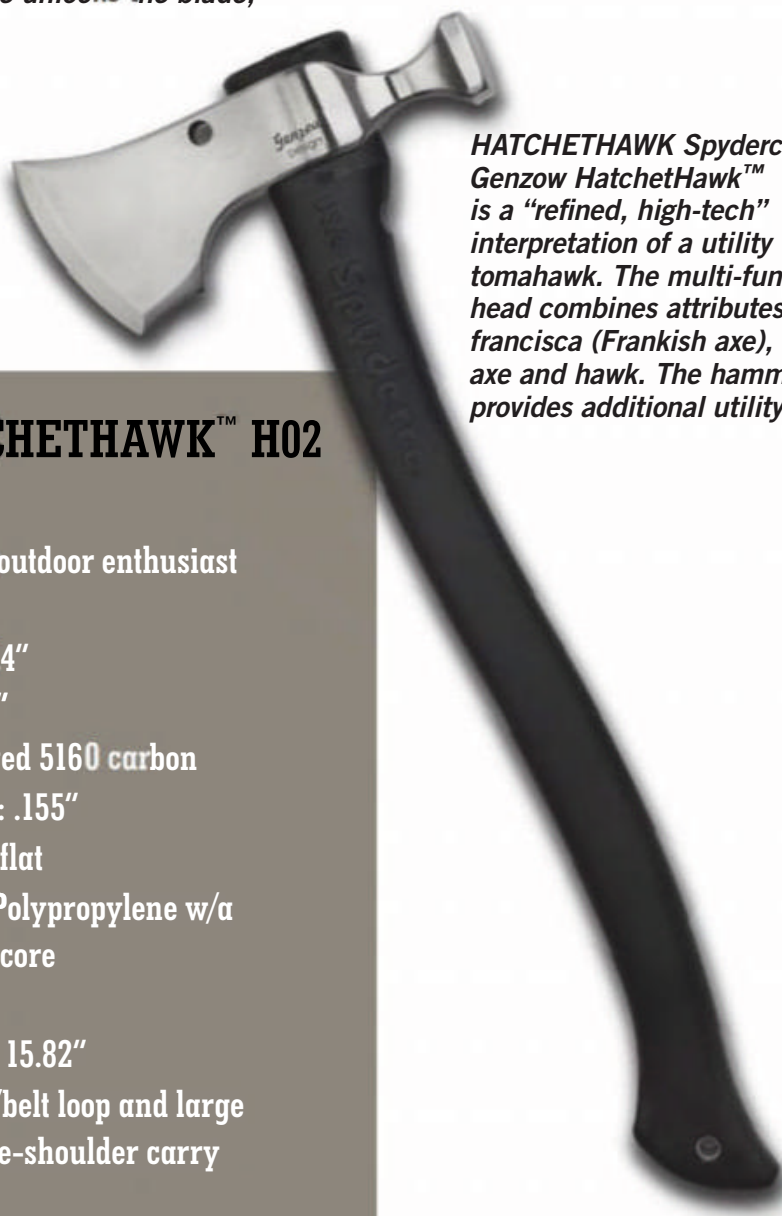
SPECIAL FEATURE: Kinematic™ opening technology

HANDLE: 6061 hard-anodized aluminum w/almost completely flush pocket clip

WEIGHT: 6.1 ozs.

CLOSED LENGTH: 4.97"

MSRP: \$200



HATCHETHAWK Spyderco’s Genzow Hatchethawk™ is a “refined, high-tech” interpretation of a utility tomahawk. The multi-function head combines attributes of the francisca (Frankish axe), bearded axe and hawk. The hammer poll provides additional utility.

GENZOW HATCHETHAWK™ H02

COMPANY: Spyderco

DESIGNER: German outdoor enthusiast Martin Genzow

BLADE LENGTH: 6.14"

EDGE LENGTH: 2.76"

BLADE STEEL: Forged 5160 carbon

BLADE THICKNESS: .155"

BLADE GRIND: Full flat

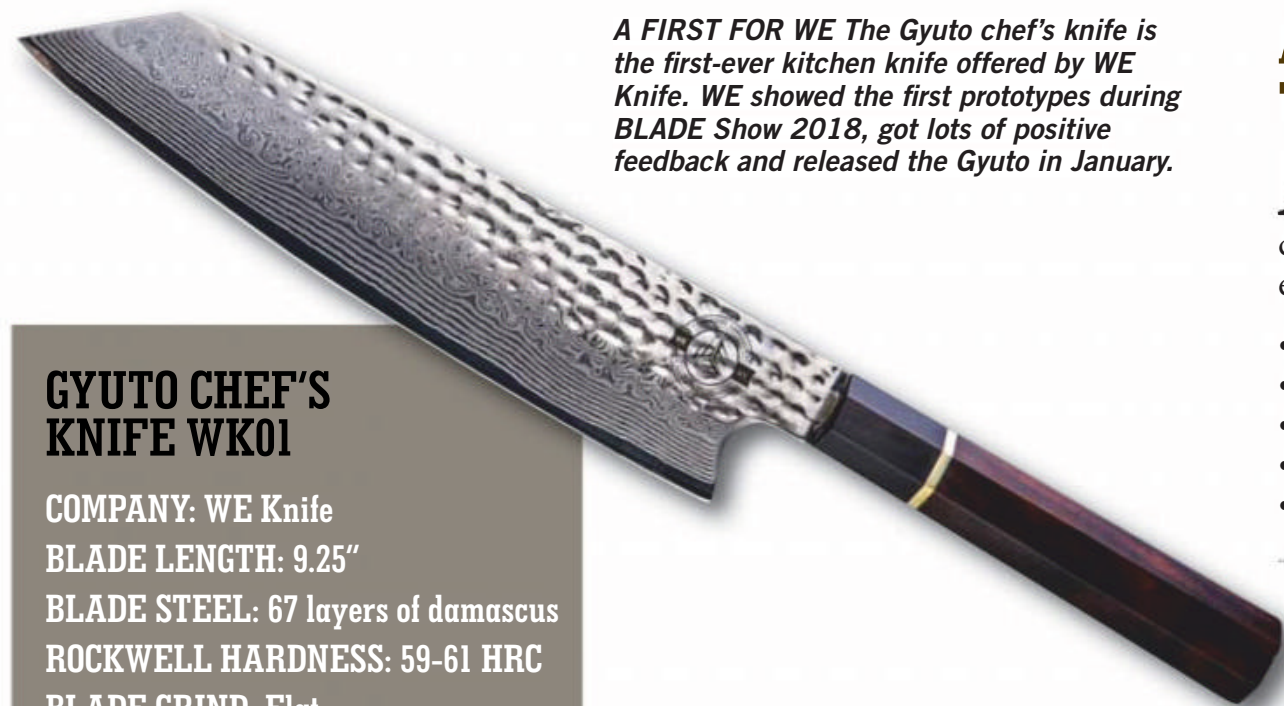
HAFT MATERIAL: Polypropylene w/a contoured aluminum core

WEIGHT: 25.1 ozs.

OVERALL LENGTH: 15.82"

SHEATH: Leather w/belt loop and large grommets for over-the-shoulder carry

MSRP: \$269.95



A FIRST FOR WE The Gyuto chef's knife is the first-ever kitchen knife offered by WE Knife. WE showed the first prototypes during BLADE Show 2018, got lots of positive feedback and released the Gyuto in January.

GYUTO CHEF'S KNIFE WK01

COMPANY: WE Knife
BLADE LENGTH: 9.25"
BLADE STEEL: 67 layers of damascus
ROCKWELL HARDNESS: 59-61 HRC
BLADE GRIND: Flat
BLADE THICKNESS: .09"
HANDLE: Wood
HANDLE THICKNESS: .87"
WEIGHT: 8.6 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 15"
MSRP: \$180
AVAILABLE: Now

ANNIVERSARIES ON THE EDGE

At least five companies celebrate birthdays in 2019. Five of those companies, with anniversary years for each, are:

- Boker: 150 (see sidebar)
- Coast: 100
- Al Mar Knives: 40 (see sidebar)
- Fallkniven: 35
- CRKT: 25



GLOW KNIFE The highlight of the ZT 0393GLCF is a light—a light that emanates from the carbon-fiber handle that glows a soft green in the dark. Drop it in a dark space or room and simply look for the green glow.

0393GLCF

COMPANY: ZT
DESIGNER: Rick Hinderer
BLADE LENGTH: 3.5"
BLADE STEEL: CPM 20CV stainless w/Hinderer's working finish
BLADE PATTERN: Hinderer Spanto
BLADE THICKNESS: .156"
ACTION: KVT ball-bearing flipper opening system
HANDLE: Titanium, working finish, glow-in-the-dark carbon-fiber overlay
LOCK: Titanium framelock w/hardened steel lockbar insert
POCKET CLIP: Titanium, left/right reversible
WEIGHT: 5 ozs.
CLOSED LENGTH: 4.75"
MSRP: \$350
AVAILABLE: Now



GE60

COMPANY: Santa Fe Stoneworks
BLADE LENGTH: 2.3"
BLADE STEEL: 9Cr stainless
HANDLE: Ithaca turquoise and zinc from the Kingman Mine, Arizona
LOCK: Lockback
MSRP: \$84
AVAILABLE: Now

WELL-BRED BLADE Santa Fe Stoneworks adds to its array of gent's—and lady's—knives with the GE60 in a handle of turquoise and zinc.



THIN BLUE LINE

COMPANY: Camillus
BLADE LENGTH: 3.25"
BLADE STEEL: 440 stainless
BLADE FINISH: Carbonitride Titanium® non-stick coat
HANDLE: Rubber; includes pocket clip
SPECIAL FEATURES: Seat-belt cutter and glass breaker in the butt
ACTION: Assisted opening
CLOSED LENGTH: 4.5"
MSRP: \$24.99

***LEST WE FORGET** The Thin Blue Line rescue folder from Camillus salutes women and men in law enforcement and the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. The same model with a red stripe called the Thin Red Line supports firefighters and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.*



TEX CREEK 20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

COMPANY: TOPS Knives
DESIGNER: Leo Espinoza
BLADE LENGTH: 4.25"
BLADE THICKNESS: .16"
BLADE STEEL: CPM 154 stainless
ROCKWELL HARDNESS: 58-60 HRC
BLADE FINISH: Tumble
HANDLE: Black canvas Micarta® w/red/black carbon fiber
WEIGHT: 7.5 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 8.88"
SHEATH: Burgundy dangler of red/black Kydex
WEIGHT W/SHEATH: 12 ozs.
MSRP: \$300
AVAILABLE: March

***SECOND 20th** The Tex Creek 20th Anniversary Edition is the second in TOPS' 20th anniversary limited-run models, the first being the Tracker 3 released late last year, the latter which sold out quickly.*



FEROCE

KNIFE: Feroce
COMPANY: Krudo Knives
BLADE LENGTH: 3.4"
BLADE STEEL: 9Cr18MoV stainless
BLADE THICKNESS: .187"
HANDLE: Titanium inserts
LOCK: Hybrid framelock
PIVOT: Ceramic ball-bearing washers
WEIGHT: 6.6 ozs.
CLOSED LENGTH: 4.85"
MSRP: \$175

***ANODIZED BLUE** The Feroce from Krudo Knives features Krudo's Thumb Wedge Pocket Deployment for blade opening and titanium handle inserts anodized blue.*

ETE ACQUIRES AL MAR

Edge Technologies Engineering LLC (ETE) has acquired the Al Mar Knife (AMK) brand, according to AMK's Gary Fadden.

The sale announcement comes in AMK's 40th anniversary year of operation.

According to a joint ETE/AMK news release, John Anthon, ETE president, is delighted to work with the iconic AMK brand and Fadden as they build on the existing product line of knives, sharpeners and lights, and also update classics.

Anthon founded and was CEO of the Great American Tool Co. (GATCO), a maker of sharpeners that is now under the Bear & Son Cutlery umbrella.

Fadden has been promoted to Al Mar chairman emeritus and will attend major industry events to help with the passing of the AMK baton. He will continue to develop "innovative, new and exciting products for Al Mar and our industry."

For more information visit almarknives.com and/or etel.com and @edge_tech_engineering on Instagram.

PD

COMPANY: Fallkniven
BLADE LENGTH: 3"
BLADE MATERIAL: Sixty-five layers of damascus SGPS powder steel
HANDLE: Desert ironwood w/24k-gold-plated bolts and medallion
LOCK: Linerlock
SPECIAL STUFF: Limited edition of 1,000; gift box; was officially introduced March 12 on Fallkniven's 35th anniversary
CLOSED LENGTH: 4.05"
MSRP: \$220



***FROZEN HEAT TREAT** From the Flexcut Hawthorne Knife Collection, the Explorer's scandi-ground blade is cryogenically hardened and tempered at -301F° using liquid nitrogen. In addition to the earth camo G-10, handle options include conditioned zebrawood and OD green Micarta®.*

EXPLORER

COMPANY: Flexcut
BLADE LENGTH: 3 7/8"
BLADE STEEL: 1095 carbon
ROCKWELL HARDNESS: Cryogenically hardened to 56-58 HRC
BLADE FINISH: Black oxide
BLADE GRIND: Scandi
BLADE THICKNESS: .118"
HANDLE: Earth camo G-10 w/hole for a lanyard
FASTENERS: Stainless steel Torx screws
WEIGHT: 4.6 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 8 3/8"
SHEATH: Handcrafted welted leather
SHEATH WEIGHT: 2 ozs.
MSRP: \$279.95



***35 SHARP YEARS** Fallkniven celebrates its 35th anniversary with the Pd, a damascus gent's folder sporting a handsome damascus blade and 24k-gold-plated furniture.*



***TOOTHED 'n STACKED** The Colonial T-37 features a sawtooth blade and a stacked two-tone G-10 handle with a non-slip, gun-checked texture. According to Colonial, it is the knife of choice for Special Forces close-quarter-combat instructor Waldevir Junior.*

HAPPY 150TH, BOKER!

Boker celebrates 150 years of making knives with a series of sesquicentennial models, from the oldest of them all, the Camp Knife, to nine others that represent an overview of the many years of the company's production: the 3000, Stockman, Delicate, Junior Scout Lightweight, Scout, Optima, Cub, Applegate and Vollintegral.

The handles are stabilized curly birch dyed green and centered with a Boker Tree Brand logo shield. All blades feature a special finish of a combo satin and polished surface. An elaborate two-color etch with a gold-etched Boker Tree Brand logo graces the blades, and the company's traditional deep black inscription provides contrast (the logo appears on the main blade only of the Camp Knife). All the knives are made exclusively for the U.S. market, individually serial numbered and limited to 150 pieces each.

T-37 TACTICAL

COMPANY: Colonial
BLADE LENGTH: 5"
BLADE STEEL: 1095 high carbon
ROCKWELL HARDNESS: 58 HRC
HANDLE: Two-tone G-10
CONSTRUCTION: Full tang
WEIGHT: 5 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 9.5"
SHEATH: Kydex all weather w/patented quick-release belt clip
MINIMUM ADVERTISED PRICE: \$300
AVAILABLE: Now



***150 CANDLES** The Junior Scout Lightweight is one of 10 special models celebrating Boker's 150 years of making knives. Blade length and steel: 2.75 inches and Bohler N690 stainless. Handle frame: G-10. Handle scales: Stabilized curly birch dyed green. Closed length: 3 5/8 inches. MSRP: \$239.*

TRAILBREAKER + 2-STEP SHARPENER COMBO

COMPANY: Smith's

BLADE LENGTH: 3.5"

BLADE STEEL: 420 stainless

HANDLE: Custom textured w/
reversible pocket clip and lanyard hole

LOCK: Linerlock

CLOSED LENGTH: 4.5"

SHARPENER: 2-Step Sharpener
pull-through model w/preset crossed
coarse carbide blades for quick edge
setting and preset crossed extra-fine
(1,500 grit) ceramic rods for a razor-
sharp finish; non-slip rubber feet;
floats in water

MSRP: \$32.99

AVAILABLE: Now



KEEP IT KEEN The Trailbreaker + 2-Step Sharpener Combo makes a great keep-it-keen EDC outfit, and the bright yellow color makes it easy to find both the knife and the sharpener if you accidentally drop either one.

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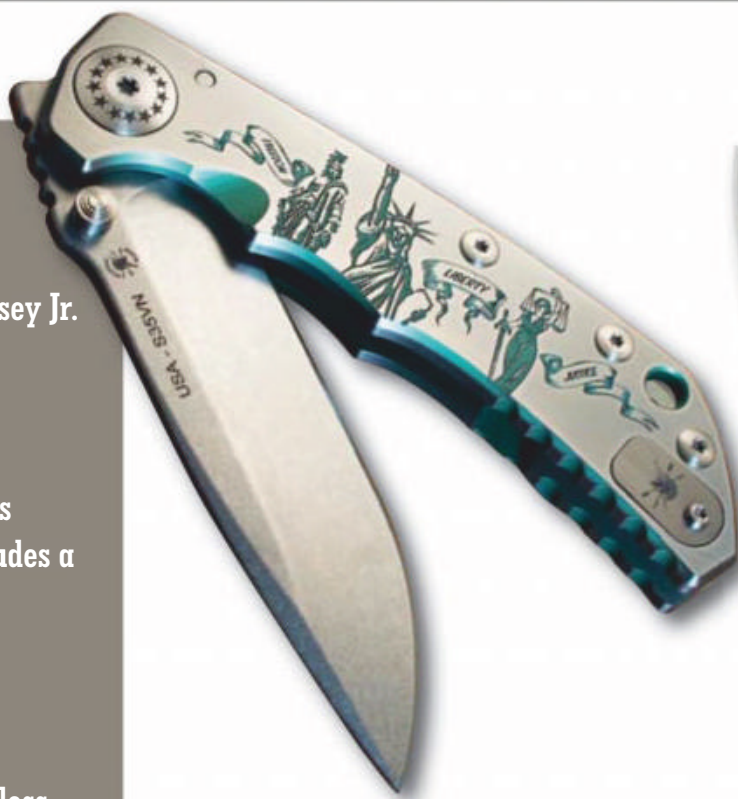
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LADIES OF FREEDOM

COMPANY: Spartan Blades
 DESIGNER: William W. "Bill" Harsey Jr.
 BLADE LENGTH: 4"
 CLOSED LENGTH: 4 13/16"
 FRAME: 6Al-4V titanium
 HANDLE: Deep engraved w/Ladies Freedom, Liberty and Justice; includes a hole for a lanyard
 POCKET CLIP: Reversible
 LOCK: Framelock
 BLADE THICKNESS: .154"
 BLADE STEEL: CPM S35VN stainless
 ROCKWELL HARDNESS: 58-60 HRC
 WEIGHT: 5.89 ozs.
 MSRP: \$525
 AVAILABLE: Now



LADIES of FREEDOM Offering four special-edition Spartan Harsey Folders has become a tradition with Spartan Blades, and this year's quad includes the Ladies of Freedom. The knife comes with all the trimmings, including dual blade thumb studs for ambidextrous opening.



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PIERCER 40-01

COMPANY: Steel Will
 DESIGNER: Tommaso Rumici
 BLADE LENGTH: 3.2"
 BLADE STEEL: D2 tool
 ROCKWELL HARDNESS: 58-60 HRC
 BLADE THICKNESS: .12"
 BLADE FINISH: Satin
 HANDLE: G-10
 LOCK: Linerlock
 CLOSED LENGTH: 3.5"
 MSRP: \$79.99
 AVAILABLE: Now

ALL-PURPOSE PIERCER The Steel Will Piercer is designed for puncturing wood, plastic, metal sheets and thick clothes. It is not a combat knife though it is ready for most cutting jobs, including self-defense if need be. The plain edge with a constant curve and high bevels is adaptable to a range of different tasks, from food prep to bushcraft.

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June 2019
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SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: CSA D-guard Bowie
BLADE LENGTH: 14.88"
BLADE MATERIAL: Damascus of 1070 and 15N20 carbon steels
DAMASCUS PATTERN: Mosaic explosion in the center w/Turkish on the borders
BLADE THICKNESS: .236"
BLADE WIDTH: 2.5"
HANDLE: Ebony
FURNITURE: W's Turkish damascus
INLAYS: 18k gold
OVERALL LENGTH: 20.3"
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR PIECE: \$12,000
MAKER: Franco Dionatam, Dept. BL4, Sebastiao Jacinto de Amorim Goncalves n 277, Filadelfia, Ibitinga-SP, BRAZIL 14940-000, francolacasartesanais@hotmail.com



SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Split-Ring-Guard Bowie
BLADE LENGTH: 9.25"
BLADE MATERIAL: 1080 carbon steel w/clay-quenched *hamon*
BLADE THICKNESS: .236"
HANDLE: Sambar stag tine
BOLSTER: Gun-blued carbon steel w/nickel-silver center line
POMMEL: Carbon steel gun blued and filed to match the stag flutes
GUARD: Gun-blued carbon steel w/vine filework and clamshell filed into top
OVERALL LENGTH: 14.6"
SHEATH (not shown): Leather, Mexican belt-loop style, dyed golden brown and black w/python skin front panel, keeper strap and Sam Brown stud
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE/SHEATH COMBO: \$1,950
MAKER: Steve Nowacki, forgesmith9@gmail.com, whitetigerknives.com Instagram/Facebook: instagram.com/stephennnowacki/facebook.com/whitetigerknives



SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Checkered Folder
BLADE LENGTH: 3"
BLADE MATERIAL: Damascus of 1080 and 15N20 carbon steels
HANDLE: Checkered ebony
CLOSED LENGTH: 3.5"
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR PIECE: \$575
MAKER: Josh Fisher, Dept. BL4, 8419 CR 3615, Murchison, TX 75778 903-203-2130 fisherknives@aol.com, jnfisherknives.com Instagram: @jnfisherknives



SPEC CHART

KNIFE PATTERN: Fighter
BLADE LENGTH: 9.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: 80CrV2 carbon steel
HEAT TREAT: Differentially heat treated
BLADE THICKNESS: .25" at the spine
BLADE FINISH: Hand rubbed
HANDLE: Stabilized Hawaiian koa w/copper mosaic pins
BOLSTERS: Carbon fiber
LINERS: Black G-10
OVERALL LENGTH: 15"
SHEATH (not shown): Hand-tooled leather in a dangler style
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE/SHEATH COMBO: \$1,400
MAKER: Jeff Davidson 817-528-2416 davidsonknives@gmail.com Instagram/Facebook: instagram.com/jeffdavidsoncustomknives/facebook.com/jeffdavidsoncustomknives



SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Big 10 Inch
BLADE LENGTH: 4 5/8"
BLADE MATERIAL: 240-layer damascus of 1084 and 15N20 carbon steels
HANDLE: Mammoth ivory
BOLSTER: 120-layer damascus of 1084 and 15N20 carbon steels
CLOSED LENGTH: 5 3/8"
OPEN LENGTH: 10" (ergo the knife's name)
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR PIECE: \$1,950
MAKER: Cliff Parker, Dept. BL4, 6350 Tulip Dr., Zephyrhills, FL 33544 813-973-1682
 cooldamascus@aol.com, cliffparkerknives.com Instagram: cliffparkerknives

SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: La Ferrari Project
BLADE MATERIAL: Patten-welded steel by Alabama Damascus
HANDLE: Carbon fiber w/red race stripes and inset Ferrari logo hubcaps; filed tang spine
BOLSTERS and LINER: G-10
SPECIAL FEATURES: The knife is shaped like the silhouette of the La Ferrari Supercar
OVERALL LENGTH: 9.5"
SHEATH (not shown): Lined w/New Zealand stag and features a Cavallino pin from Ferrari
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE/SHEATH COMBO: \$900
MAKER: Brian Milinski, Dept. BL4, 12122 Alston Dr., Meadows Place, TX 77477 713-724-1993 mrknives@yahoo.com

SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Corr
KNIFE PATTERN: Push dagger
BLADE LENGTH: 2.7"
BLADE STEEL: 440C stainless
BLADE THICKNESS: .19"
BLADE FINISH: Black DLC coat
HANDLE: Titanium
EMBELLISHMENT: Gold natural zircons engraved by Carlo Cavedon
OVERALL LENGTH: 5.1"
SHEATH: Leather carved by Kiara
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR PIECE (includes sheath): \$1,500
MAKER: Denis Mura, Dept. BL4, Via Pesciule 15, 56021 Cascina (PI) Italy +39 3388365277
 zebld@libero.it Instagram/Facebook: @denis_mura/Denis Mura

SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Adrienne
KNIFE PATTERN: Take-down dagger
BLADE LENGTH: 13.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: Multi-bar W-twisted pattern damascus
HANDLE: Buffalo horn w/titanium inlay
POMMEL: Same material as blade
GUARD: Carbon steel
OVERALL LENGTH: 19"
SHEATH (not shown): Sturgeon and ray skins
MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR PIECE: \$9,700 (more if engraved)
MAKER: Veronique Laurent, Dept. BL4, Avenue du Capricorne, 53, 1200 Brussels, Belgium, 0032 477 48 66 73, whatsonthebench@gmail.com

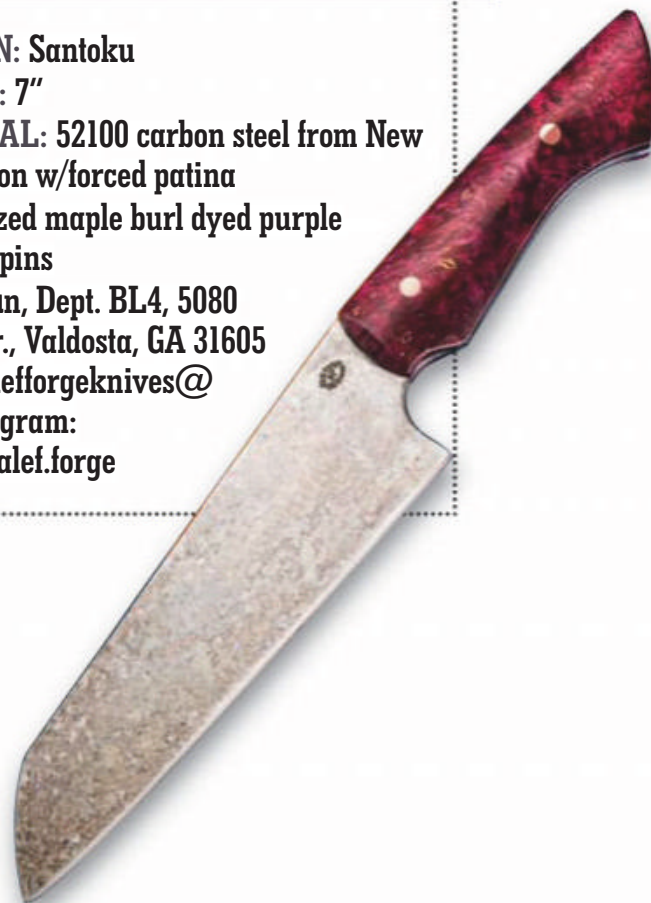
SPEC CHART

KNIFE PATTERN: Stockman
BLADE STEEL: CPM 154 stainless
HANDLE: Jigged bone
BACKSPRINGS: CPM 154 stainless
LINERS and BOLSTERS: Integral construction of 416 stainless steel; liners fileworked
CLOSED LENGTH: 3 5/8"
MAKER: Craig Brewer, Dept. BL4, 425 White Cedar, Killeen, TX 76542 254-368-1415 craig6@embarqmail.com Instagram: craigbrewerhandmadeknives



SPEC CHART

KNIFE PATTERN: Santoku
BLADE LENGTH: 7"
BLADE MATERIAL: 52100 carbon steel from New Jersey Steel Baron w/forced patina
HANDLE: Stabilized maple burl dyed purple w/copper Corby pins
MAKER: Ed Braun, Dept. BL4, 5080 Branch Point Dr., Valdosta, GA 31605 229-563-8682 alefforgeknives@gmail.com Instagram: instagram.com/alef.forge



SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Wicked Lanny's
PATTERN: Single-blade slip joint
BLADE LENGTH: 3"
BLADE STEEL: CPM 154 stainless
HANDLE: Carbon fiber over green and gray G-10
BOLSTERS, LINERS AND SHIELD: Stainless steel
CLOSED LENGTH: 4"
MAKER: Jared Oeser, J. Oeser Knives, joeserknives.com



SPEC CHART

KNIFE THEME: Dracula
BLADE LENGTH: 10.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: Multi-bar damascus of 1084 and 15N20 carbon steels
HANDLE: Ancient walrus ivory
GUARD and BUTTCAP: Shibuichi, a copper alloy w/25% silver
SHEATH (not shown): Cowhide w/dinosaur bone set in fine silver
UNDEAD FILES: Halloween-themed knife based on the mythical and historical Dracula. Anglo-Saxon dragon in the handle represents the fighting between the Anglo-Saxon merchant class in Transylvania and Vlad Dracula
MAKER: Robert Burns, Dept. BL4, 430 College Hwy., Southwick, MA 01077 412-477-4677



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Note: Events with an asterisk () have knives and knife accessories as the main/sole focus. Events with two asterisks (**) are knifemaking seminars or symposiums, cutting competitions, auctions or other knife-related events.*

MARCH

MARCH 8-11 NUREMBERG, GERMANY The IWA Outdoor Classics, Exhibition Centre. Visit iwa.info (for the trade only).

MARCH 15-16 DALTON, GA Dalton Georgia Knife Roadshow, North Georgia Trade & Convention Center. Call 423-238-6753 or visit jbrucevoyles.com.*

MARCH 22-23 HAMPTONVILLE, NC The 44th Annual Tar Heel Cutlery Club Show, Yadkin VFW Building. E-mail J33cm@yahoo.com or call Johnny Meador 336-239-5726.*

MARCH 21-24 CLYDE, NC The ABS Great Smoky Mountain Hammer-In, Haywood Community College. Contact Ken Hall 828-400-7815 khall@hallenergyconsulting.com and/or Cindy Sheely 419-832-0400 cindy@americanbladesmith.com.**

MARCH 29-30 FORT WORTH, TX *NEW DATE AND VENUE!* International Custom Cutlery Exposition, Stockyard Station in the Stampede Room. Contact Jerry Moen at jerry@moenworks.com.*

MARCH 29-30 EAST ALTON, IL The 30th Anniversary Bunker Hill Knife Club Show, Julia's Banquet Center. Contact Tim Bryant 618-531-0011 tbryant@yahoo.com, or Gene Winston genewinston@yahoo.com.*

MARCH 29-31 JANESVILLE, WI Badger Knife Show, Holiday Inn Express and Janesville Conference Center. Contact Bob Schrap, Dept. BL4, POB 511 Elm Grove, WI 53122 414-479-9765 badgerknifeclub@aol.com, badgerknifeclub.com.*

APRIL

APRIL 5-7 HARRISONBURG, VA The 26th Annual Shenandoah Valley Knife Show, Rockingham County Fairgrounds. Visit 10times.com/Shenandoah-valley-knife-show, Shenandoah Valley Knife Collectors on Facebook.

APRIL 5-7 MCCALLA, AL The 31st Batson Bladesmithing Symposium & Knife Show, Tannehill Ironworks. Contact Judd Clem, Dept. BL4, 111 Yorkshire Dr., Athens, AL 35613 256-232-2645 clem.judd@att.net.* **

APRIL 6-7 TULSA, OK Wanenmacher's Tulsa Arms Show, Expo Square (Tulsa Fairgrounds). Contact Tulsa Gun Show, Inc., Dept. BL4, POB 33201, Tulsa, OK 74153-1201 918-492-0401 or visit tulsaarmsshow.com.

APRIL 13-14 WASHINGTON, AR The ABS Spring Piney Woods Hammer-In, W.F. Moran School of Bladesmithing. Contact Mike Williams at hforge@pine-net.com

and/or Cindy Sheely 419-832-0400 cindy@americanbladesmith.com.**

APRIL 13-14 EUGENE, OR The 44th Annual Oregon Knife Collectors Association Knife Show, Lane Events Center. Contact Oregon Knife Collectors, Dept. BL4, POB 2091, Eugene, OR 97402 541-484-5564 oregonknifeclub.org.*

APRIL 26-27 HAGERSTOWN, MD Mason-Dixon Knife Club 2-Day Knife Show, Baymont Inn & Suites. Contact William C. Crilley 717-404-8766 crill9@hotmail.com.*

APRIL 27-28 GROTON, CT The 38th Annual NCCA Extravaganza Knife Show, Mystic Marriott. Contact Larry Clifford 401-742-6779 lcliff1@verizon.net.*

MAY

MAY 3-4 GREER, SC Palmetto Cutlery Club Show, Greer Recreation Center. Contact Randy Randall Wooten@aflglobal.com.*

MAY 4-5 MISSOULA, MT The 23rd Annual Montana Knifemakers Association Show and Sale, Grizzly Harley-Davidson. Contact Nancy 406-728 or Rick 406-721-6903 rmw_artknives@yahoo.com.*

MAY 4-5 EASTON, PA Semi-Annual Lehigh Valley Knife Show, Charles Chrin Community Center of Palmer Township. CALL BILL 484-241-6176 or visit PAKnife-show.com.*

MAY 18-19 MASSILLON, OH The Dale Warther Memorial Knife Show, Massillon Knights of Columbus. Contact D. Musgrave 330-745-4242 or e-mail darlene5674@att.net, wrca-knives.org.*

JUNE

JUNE 7-9 ATLANTA, GA The 38th Annual BLADE Show, Cobb Galleria Centre, I-285 & US 41, one exit off I-75 across from the Cumberland Mall, adjacent to the Renaissance Waverly Hotel. World's largest show of handmade, factory and antique knives. A combined total of nearly 1,000 exhibitor tables and booths. Join the world's greatest national and international knifemakers, cutlery manufacturers, collectors, collections and knife lovers. Site of the BLADE Magazine 2019 Knife Of-The-Year® Awards for factory knives, the BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® inductions and much more. Host to BLADE University, the annual ABS meeting and special Knifemakers' Guild section. Seminars include the BLADE Show World Championship Cutting Competitions, how to use, how to make,

youth clubs, etc. Contact BLADE®, c/o Alicia Newton blade@bladeshow.com.* **

JULY

JULY 12-13 BELLEVILLE, IL Belleville Knife Expo, Belle Clair Fairgrounds. Contact Carl Edwards 618-645-2959 bville-knife@yahoo.com.*

JULY 12-14 AUBURN, ME The 11th Annual New England Hammer-In, New England School of Metalwork. Contact Dereck Glaser 888-753-7502 dglaser@newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com and/or Cindy Sheely 419-832-0400 cindy@americanbladesmith.com.**

JULY 27-28 WASHINGTON, MO The AIK Knife Show, Elks Lodge. Contact Crystal 618-656-9868 adamsknifeworks.com@gmail.com, aikknifeshow.com.*

AUGUST

AUG. 3-4 CROSSVILLE, TN Cumberland County Knife & Gun Show, Cumberland County Complex. Contact Donnie 931-250-1981 donnie.moody@hotmail.com.

AUG. 16-17 LEXINGTON, KY Central Kentucky Knife Show, Clarion Hotel Convention Center. Contact Kathy Litton 502-863-1840 litton711@aol.com.*

AUG. 23-25 TROY, OH Mid America Hammer-In, Miami County Fairgrounds. Contact Butch Sheely 419-308-3471 sheelyblades@gmail.com and/or Cindy Sheely 419-832-0400 cindy@americanbladesmith.com.**

OCTOBER

OCT. 12-13 WASHINGTON, AR Fall Piney Woods Hammer-In, W.F. Moran School of Bladesmithing. Contact Mike Williams at hforge@pine-net.com and/or Cindy Sheely 419-832-0400 cindy@americanbladesmith.com.*

To ensure timely publication of your knife show in the "Show Calendar," BLADE® requests that you email all pertinent information concerning your show in written form—dates, locations, etc.—at least three months before the show takes place to BLADE c/o Lori Hallman at lori@gundigest.com and/or Steve Shackelford at steve@blademag.com. BLADE depends on the shows themselves for prompt and accurate information.

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BLADE

SCANDI:

WHY THE SCANDI IS BEST FOR BUSHCRAFT

BY ABE ELIAS

There are many blade grinds, each with its subtle variations. There is no perfect grind that does it all, but some grinds function in areas better than the rest. In this particular case, we are looking at the virtues of the Scandi grind.

Let's first talk about what the Scandi is so it is clear what the grind's benefits are. A Scandi grind carries a single bevel that runs to zero degrees. In other words, it is a single grind *only*. Unlike many other grinds, the Scandi runs to the edge with no angle change in what is also known as a *zero grind*. Scandi grinds have a flat section of the blade that starts at the top of the bevel and runs to the spine. Anything else is simply not a Scandi. People have tried to create a variety of variations with names like *modified Scandi* or *Scandi vex*. In actuality, there are no

Abe Elias made these two Diving Sparrow Sakers—one with a full flat grind (left) and the other in a high Scandi grind (right). (Abe Elias image)



variations of the Scandi because such “variations” usually are other grinds that already exist.

BENEFITS

- *Perfect wood geometry.* The Scandi excels at bushcraft chores because its geometry is perfect for working with wood. Blade geometry in principle is

no different than the geometry of a boat hull or aircraft fuselage. All are made to help penetrate material. A boat cuts through water, a plane cuts through air and a knife cuts through various media. It is not enough to simply be sharp, the tool must have the proper geometry to optimize performance.

- *Zero grind.* The fact the Scandi is

(cont. on p. 74)

IS IT THE BEST BLADE GRIND FOR BUSHCRAFT?

WHY THE SCANDI IS *NOT* BEST FOR BUSHCRAFT

BY JAMES MORGAN AYRES

In spite of its popularity, the scandi grind is not the best grind for bushcraft. Now I'll duck the slings and arrows of outraged bushcrafters.

Let's define bushcraft: 1. The skills necessary for living in the bush. 2. Skill pertaining to bush country, as in finding one's way, hunting, locating water, etc.

Bushcraft is not just carving wooden spoons and feather sticks. Many regard crafting wooden implements to be the whole of bushcraft and disregard the other bushcraft skills. Using a knife to make a spear and atlatl is only a first step. Using the weapon and hunting skill to bring meat back to the fire is bushcraft. Preparing wild game and foraged plants and cooking a meal that's edible and tasty is bushcraft. Building shelters in various climates with a knife as the only tool is bushcraft. Cutting bamboo with a

James Morgan Ayres uses a Nikov knife with a convex-ground blade to make a fish spear. (ML and AE Ayres image)



knife to use as a cook pot or to pack with sand to use as a water filter is bushcraft. Making traps that actually produce ... well, you get the idea. A good bushcraft knife should be efficient at all these tasks and all others needed for life in the bush.

The scandi grind has become popular during the past couple of decades due to four reasons: 1. Over promotion by certain survival experts. 2. The scandi works OK for carving soft wood, and many users' experience is limited to doing just that. 3. Many of today's bushcrafters have never used any other grind. 4. The

availability of low-cost, quality knives with a scandi grind, as exemplified by Mora. Hype aside, Mora makes good, inexpensive knives that work OK *in spite of the scandi grind*, not because of it.

The scandi grind isn't bad, it's just not the best. Why? Geometry. The intersecting planes of the scandi grind create a wedge. A wedge is useful for shallow woodcraft on soft woods, such as making fuzz sticks or carving spoons, and for batoning soft woods. However, the wedge creates too much resistance and drags and hangs up in deep cuts, especially in hard woods,

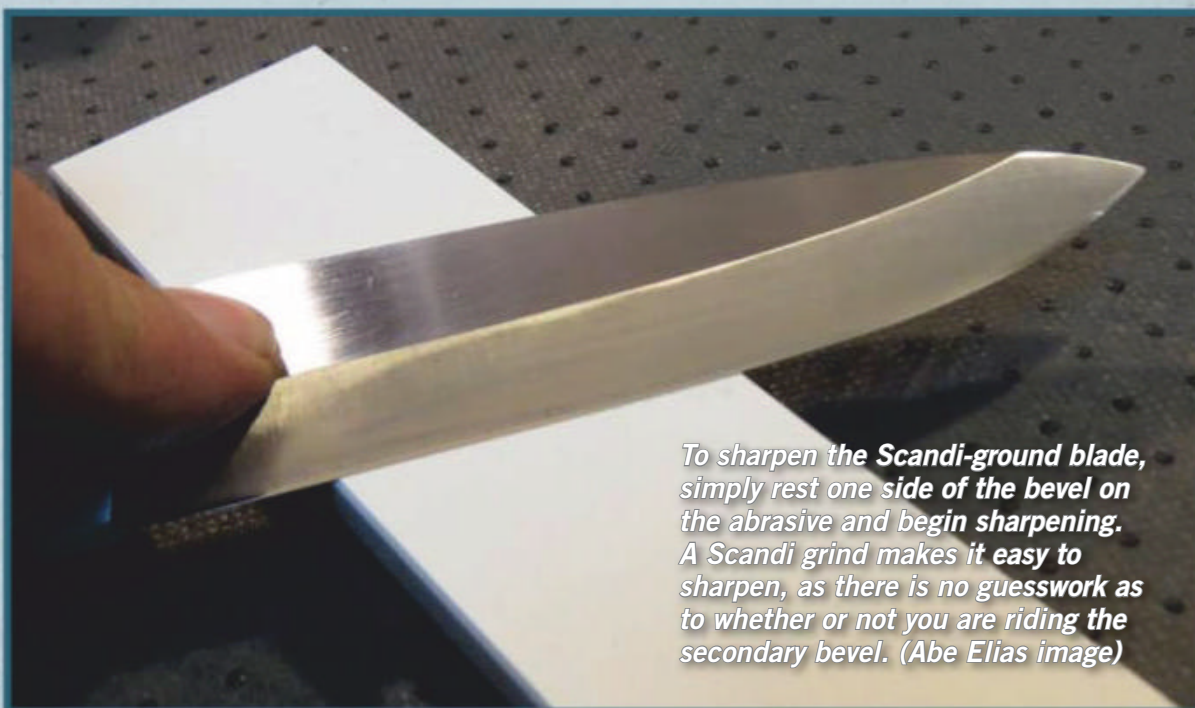
(cont. on p. 75)



The zero grind provides a great flat cross section that allows the blade to track straight while whittling wood. The blade finds its track between the grain and rides along it. (Abe Elias image)



A Scandi grind is a particularly aggressive cutter on soft and hard woods. Look closely at these hardy shavings. The finish on the exposed cut end of the stick looks as if it has been sanded and had a finish applied to it. (Abe Elias image)



To sharpen the Scandi-ground blade, simply rest one side of the bevel on the abrasive and begin sharpening. A Scandi grind makes it easy to sharpen, as there is no guesswork as to whether or not you are riding the secondary bevel. (Abe Elias image)

ground to zero allows the edge to be as thin as possible with no change in angle. Changes in angle create extra friction. Hence, the Scandi grind meets with the least resistance possible when it enters the cutting medium. Keep in mind I am referring to a properly ground Scandi grind and not some disproportioned wedge-like resemblance. There is no set angle for a Scandi grind as the thickness of the material may vary and the height of the grind will vary as well. As a knifemaker, I have ground some of my Scandis to as low as 10 degrees a side. Simply put, the thinner straight bevel pierces like a needle, giving the knife cutting power.

- *Inertia is your friend.* Another benefit of a Scandi grind is that you can achieve a thin edge and, unlike with a full flat grind, you maintain the blade weight of a saber grind. You might not think so but having that bit of extra spine weight increases your ability to drive the edge forward. As you make a cut, lighter-weight blades lose rigidity further out from your grip. A blade with more weight helps battle against the loss of leverage, in part due to the next benefit of the Scandi grind's: the parting effect.

- *Parting is such sweet sorrow.* One of the benefits of a Scandi grind is as the blade enters the cutting medium, it meets the transition point where the bevel changes to the flat. The same thing happens with a saber grind, with one exception: the saber grind has a secondary bevel that creates a friction point along the blade and a change of angle for the initial cutting geometry. As the cutting medium encounters the shoulder of the flat on a Scandi grind, it is forced further apart. The tension created on the cutting medium's fibers in front of the blade edge makes it easier for the fibers to be severed as the edge engages them. The whole action creates a bit of a "popping" effect. This benefit is one of the reasons why the knife can dive deep into a cut and take off huge potato-chip-like shavings.

As any cutting tool passes through a medium, the tool has two sides to reference the cutting action. On the top of the cut where the old material

(cont. on p. 76)

but also on any dense or tough material, including root vegetables, which crack rather than split, and, importantly, on meat. Try butchering any large game with a Scandi grind and you'll quickly learn why butchers and hunting guides do not use Scandi-ground blades. The scandi grind is also said to be easier to sharpen because the blade provides a guide. But, if the user follows the instructions of the advocates of Scandi, he must remove a great deal of steel, which requires hundreds of strokes on the stone. With a modicum of skill other grinds are faster and easier to sharpen.

The smooth, slim, oval profile of the convex grind offers less resistance to materials, is superior to the Scandi on all points and will do everything better. I first learned of the superior performance of the convex grind during the years I lived and worked in Southeast Asia, and spent much time with indigenous village peoples. At that time I daily carried a Randall Model 1. In Mindanao and the Visayas (Philippines) the local folks used handforged *punals*, knives with blades from 6 to 8 inches long and, of course, *barongs* with blades about 2 feet long.

Setting aside the longer blades, I quickly realized that the *punals* were far superior in performance to my knife in every use: making bows, arrows and spears, splitting kindling, shaving tinder, dressing game, cutting meat, opening coconuts, harvesting fruit, building bamboo shelters, etc. Doing these things was part of the locals' daily lives—*real* bushcraft, not recreation.

Wondering why their blades performed so much better than mine, I brought some back to the States. I showed them to BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member and ABS master smith Wayne Goddard and asked him why they performed better. He pointed out that the blades had only one thing in common: all were convex ground. "That's the key," Wayne said, "not the steel or the forging, it's the geometry." From experience over the past 30 years of living in primitive conditions, reviewing hundreds of knives for *BLADE*® and other publications, and teaching survival and bushcraft, I have found Wayne's statement to be true.



A Fallkniven knife's convex-ground blade batons easily through seasoned oak. (ML and AE Ayres image)



A Scandi-ground blade binds in a deep cut. (ML and AE Ayres image)

EXAMPLES

Combining a class with photography for my current book, *Survival Knives Selection and Use*, I demonstrated how to efficiently use a belt knife to harvest river cane and build a quickie shelter. I brought along an assortment of loaner knives including those with convex grinds by Wayne Goddard, Fallkniven and Bark River, and knives with Scandi grinds by Kellam, Helle and Mora, as well as a few other knives with saber, flat and hollow grinds. After completing the demonstration shelter I handed out knives and tasked each student to build a similar shelter. I also instructed them to pass around and use each knife to gain familiarity with various knives. Within 30 minutes of sweaty work and with no prompting from me, each of the students was maneuvering to use the more efficient convex grinds. I've seen

(cont. on p. 76)



A bushcraft student used his Fallkniven model with a convex-ground blade to build this survival shelter. (ML and AE Ayres image)

is severed from the core material is referred to as the *raker*. On the bottom of the cut, the part of the blade that rides along the freshly revealed material is the *relief side*. Other blade geometries have secondary bevels or, in the case of a convex grind, have a curved surface. In the case of a Scandi grind the relief side of the tool is flat. It has one bevel, which forms a flat side. As the blade moves forward, the flat relief side allows the tool to bear on the newly exposed surface and track straight through the cut as it moves between the cutting medium's fibers. This enables you to spend less energy controlling the cut and more energy to propel it. This results in the ability to make more aggressive cuts with greater control.

To test this, go to the extreme. Grab a convex-ground blade and a Scandi-ground one and start your cut about 7 inches from the end of a piece of wood. The "climb" from a Scandi grind will

be very little or even none. In fact, it might want to dive even deeper. A convex grind will do what is called *porpoising*. Porpoising is when the knife dives initially in the cut and, unless you exercise some effort, it will want to climb up out of the cut, resulting in a dishing effect. Think of porpoising as a dolphin jumping out of water.

• *Easy to sharpen.* Lastly, a Scandi grind is easy to sharpen. To sharpen one rest it on its single bevel against the stone and proceed to sharpen. You don't have to find the secondary bevel and you are riding a nice, broad, easy-to-rest-on bevel.

As you might have noticed, most of my references are to woodworking or carving. It is not that you can't process meat with a Scandi grind, it's just that I think meat processing and butchering are not where it excels. If you want to work wood fast and effectively, a Scandi is your best bet.

BLADE

this happen many times over the years.

Last winter while living in the foothills of the Stara Planina Mountains of Bulgaria, I did a comparison review of the Mora Garberg and a 5-inch-blade utility knife by Bulgarian knifemaker Yassen Nikov (nikovknives.com). Yassen's knife had a convex grind. I batoned seasoned firewood, made a winter shelter and primitive weapons, and prepared meals.

Three quick snap cuts with Yassen's convex blade and I had a shaft with which to work. The Scandi-ground blade required press cuts and whittling to get a shaft, more work, more time and more calories expended, which can be critical in the bush. Splitting the shafts of saplings for fishing spears, the convex blade cut cleanly with full control. The Scandi-ground blade cracked and split saplings from the same stand, making the shafts unusable. With light batoning the convex blade easily slipped through seasoned firewood. Due to the thicker blade of the Garberg it dragged even more than the standard Mora. It was woefully inefficient dressing game,

especially disjuncting duck and filleting fish, and preparing meat and foraged vegetables.

For bushcraft I rate blade profiles in this order: 1. Convex; 2. Flat (no shoulder); 3 & 4. Scandi and saber (more or less interchangeable); 5. Hollow (hangs up at the spine); and 6. Chisel (deflects).

Yeah, I know, basic Moras are affordable. As to actual performance, use what American mountain men used: flat-ground blades. Try a \$10 Ontario Old Hickory knife side by side with a Mora. Better yet, try a convex blade from Condor Tool & Knife, Bark River or Fallkniven, or one from an individual maker such as Yassen Nikov who makes excellent convex-ground knives for less than the price of a Garberg. The truth will be revealed!

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BUSHCRAFT BUSTOUT!



Each bushcraft test knife had its strong suit. The TOPS Fieldcraft Folder (left) and Boker Arbolito Bushcraft (second from left) were deep slicers, while the Kizlyar Supreme Pioneer and Camillus Bushcrafter excelled at fine slicing.

THE LATEST LEGION OF BUSHCRAFT KNIVES BLAZES NEW TRAILS

The modern bushcraft movement is a movement no more. Firmly entrenched in the USA and abroad, bushcrafters have carved their niche in the outdoor arena and taken their share of the cutlery market with it. What was once a fledgling movement over a dozen years ago is firmly established with scads of custom knifemakers and many knife manufacturers offering bushcraft fare in their line-ups.

Some of the newest factory examples

in the genre include the Boker Arbolito Bushcraft, Camillus Bushcrafter, Kizlyar Supreme Pioneer and TOPS Fieldcraft Folder. It was my pleasure to put them all through their paces.

The BUSHCRAFT BUNCH

The TOPS Knives Fieldcraft Folder is the only folding knife in the bunch. Folders that can stand the abuse of bushcraft tasks are few and far between, and TOPS put the folder version of its B.O.B.

(Brothers of Bushcraft) fixed blade through years of testing.

The Fieldcraft is 9.75 inches open and 5.5 inches closed—more than big enough to accommodate large mitts. The 4.375-inch 1095 carbon steel blade is a drop-point style—the arch of the spine is very subtle—and the blade edge is a 3/8-inch-deep modified Scandi grind that has a fine secondary bevel. A linerlock keeps the blade stout in the open position. There is a notched thumb



From left: the Boker Arbolito Bushcraft, TOPS Fieldcraft Folder, Kizlyar Supreme Pioneer and Camillus Bushcrafter.



Semi-skinner blades are somewhat of a rarity in the bushcraft world. The Camillus Bushcrafter was a heck of a slicer, making quick work of the 1/16-inch suede leather.

ramp for added purchase. The handle is a natural linen Micarta® and features a bow-drill pivot on both sides, plus a pocket clip. A brown leather belt pouch is included. MSRP: \$270.

The Boker Arbolito Bushcraft is a handsome, straightforward fixed blade 8.875 inches overall. The 4.875-inch handle is gray linen Micarta with nice curves, including a kick-out at the base to help keep the grip secured. The 4-inch modified Scandi blade is of Bohler N690, a cobalt stainless steel, and sports a stonewash finish. The depth of the grind is 5/16 inch and there is gimping on the base of the spine for choking up on the blade. The knife is manufactured at Boker Arbolito in Argentina, a supplier of excellent fixed blades dating back to its founding in 1983. The Arbolito Bushcraft rides in a brown leather belt sheath with a fire steel loop attached—a nice touch and the only knife in the group so equipped. MSRP: \$159.95.

Rarely do you see a semi-skinner blade with a Scandi grind on a bushcraft knife like with the Camillus Bushcrafter. It is 8.5 inches overall with 4 inches of that in the upswept skinner blade. The grind averages a quarter inch and a black oxide coating helps keep the rust bugs away from the 1095 carbon steel. The handle is curvaceous with a nice palm swell, and the slightly coarse brown canvas Micarta scales make for excellent purchase. Virtually all bushcraft knives have a lanyard hole but the elongated “hot dog” cutout is a nice touch, as it helps eliminate binding by allowing the lanyard to be thrown to one side or the other. The knife

CAMILLUS BUSHCRAFTER

BLADE LENGTH: 4"

BLADE MATERIAL: 1095 carbon steel with gray oxide finish

HANDLE MATERIAL: Brown canvas Micarta®

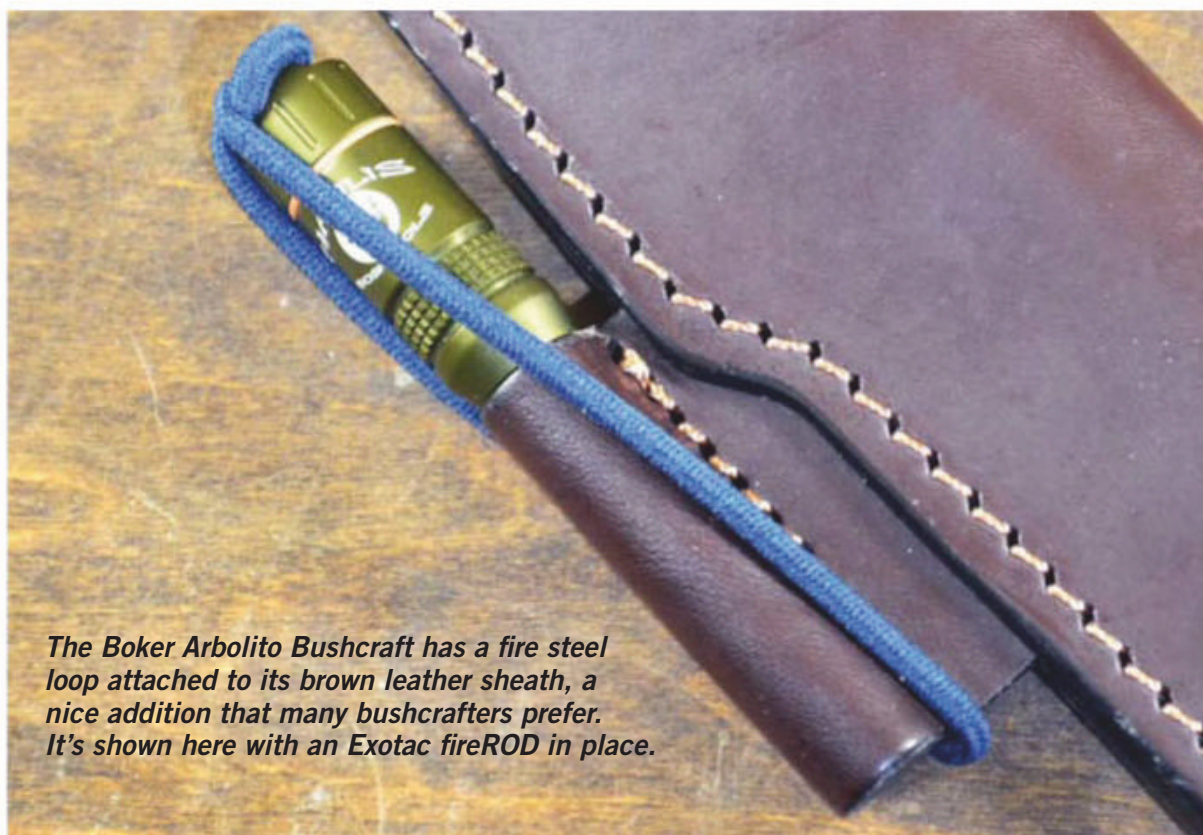
WEIGHT: 6.3 ozs.

OVERALL LENGTH: 8.5"

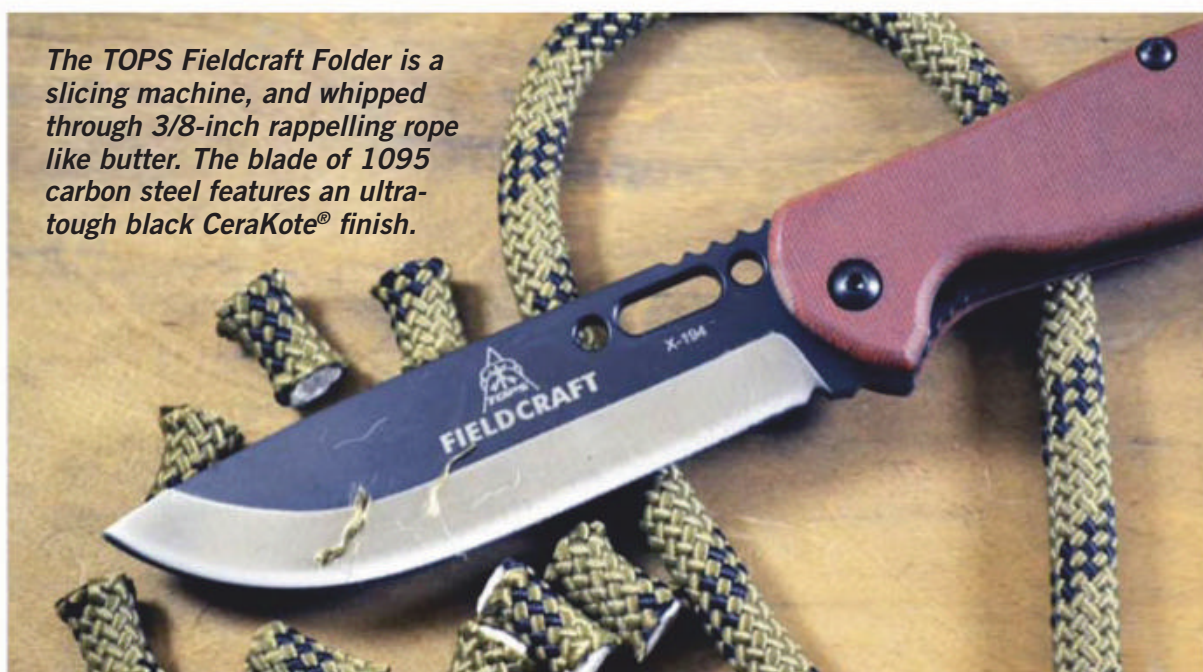
CARRY: Brown leather belt sheath

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: USA

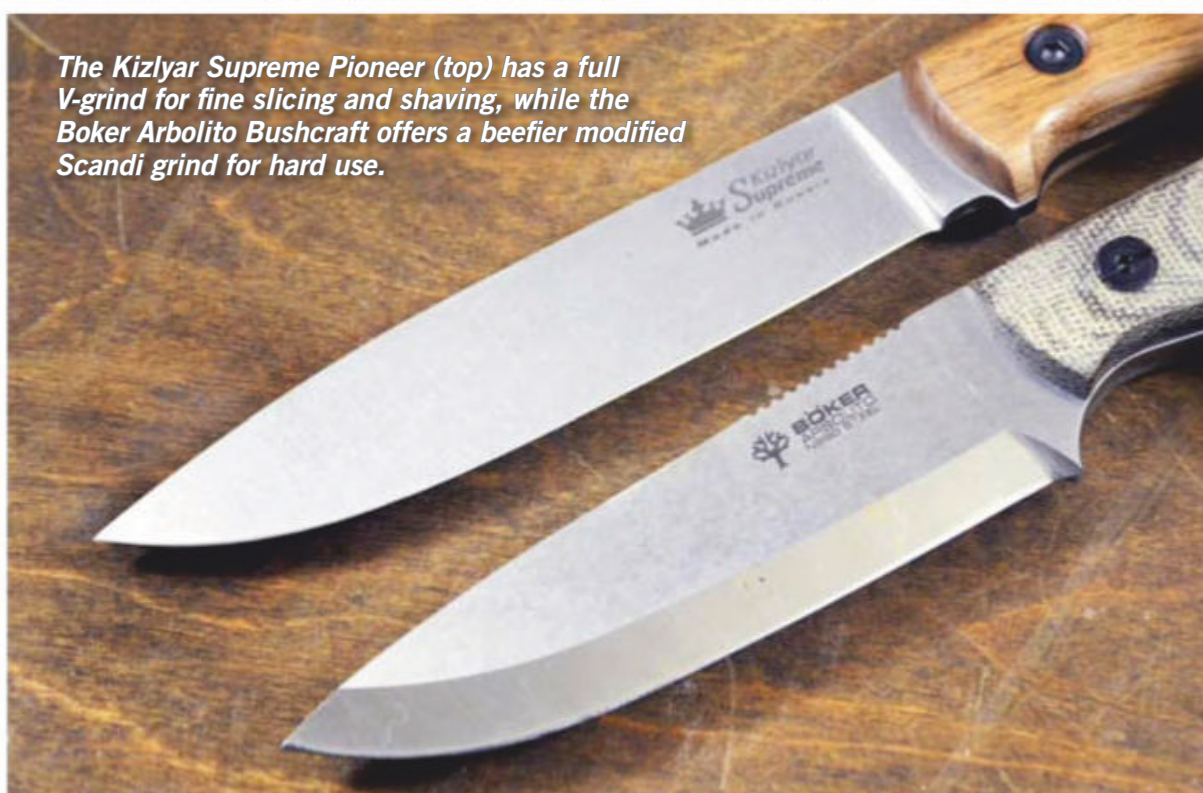
MSRP: \$134.99



The Boker Arbolito Bushcraft has a fire steel loop attached to its brown leather sheath, a nice addition that many bushcrafters prefer. It's shown here with an Exotac fireROD in place.



The TOPS Fieldcraft Folder is a slicing machine, and whipped through 3/8-inch rappelling rope like butter. The blade of 1095 carbon steel features an ultra-tough black CeraKote® finish.



The Kizlyar Supreme Pioneer (top) has a full V-grind for fine slicing and shaving, while the Boker Arbolito Bushcraft offers a beefier modified Scandi grind for hard use.

BOKER ARBOLITO BUSHCRAFT

BLADE LENGTH: 4"

BLADE MATERIAL: Bohler N690 cobalt stainless steel

HANDLE MATERIAL: Gray linen Micarta®

WEIGHT: 7.19 ozs.

OVERALL LENGTH: 8.875"

CARRY: Leather belt sheath w/fire steel loop

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Argentina

MSRP: \$167.95

comes with a brown leather belt sheath. MSRP: \$99.99.

The Kizlyar Supreme Pioneer is 9.125 inches overall, 5 inches of that in a V-ground drop-point blade of Sleipner stainless steel. Sleipner is most often compared to domestic D2 tool steel, which is technically not a stainless steel. Both are carbon steels but Sleipner's 13 percent chromium (D2 has 12 percent) enables it to classify as a stainless. The Pioneer's 4.125-inch handle features attractive walnut scales with a kick-out and lanyard hole at the base. Overall weight is 6.06 ounces, which helps make it somewhat svelte for its size, and a brown leather belt sheath is provided. MSRP: \$129.95.

LORE TESTS

I tested the four knives in a variety of ways

TOPS FIELDCRAFT FOLDER

BLADE LENGTH: 4.375"

BLADE MATERIAL: 1095 carbon steel

HANDLE MATERIAL: Natural linen Micarta®

WEIGHT: 8.5 ozs.

CLOSED LENGTH: 5.5"

CARRY: Pocket clip and/or leather belt pouch

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: USA

MSRP: \$270



Handle choice is an important factor in choosing a bushcraft knife. The Camillus Bushcrafter (left) and TOPS Fieldcraft Folder (right) have wide handles, the author's preference, though thinner handles have their place, too. Note the Camillus knife's hot-dog-shaped lanyard hole and the bow-drill pivot depression in the TOPS folder, which has a matching depression on the flip side as well.



The Boker Arbolito Bushcraft was the batoning champ of the test bunch, able to split 3-inch-diameter hardwood with ease. Its hefty weight—7.19 ounces—was a benefit for performing the task.



Exclusive to L.T. Wright's The Knife Connection, the Woodland Pro 4.0 is designed for batoning, scraping, drilling, slicing, field dressing, skinning and cutting up large game. Blade length and material: 4 inches and 1/8-inch-thick A2 tool steel. Overall length: 8 3/8 inches. MSRP: \$214.50. (L.T. Wright image)

KIZLYAR SUPREME PIONEER

BLADE LENGTH: 5"

BLADE MATERIAL: Sleipner stainless steel

HANDLE MATERIAL: Walnut

WEIGHT: 6.06 ozs.

OVERALL LENGTH: 9.125"

CARRY: Brown leather belt sheath

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Russia

MSRP: \$129.95

typical of bushcraft lore. Given the wide differences in these knives I decided to gauge them on their strengths as opposed to putting some through tasks they had no business doing, such as batoning, which is not well suited to the Fieldcraft Folder or Camillus Bushcrafter.

The two knives most similar are the Boker Arbolito Bushcraft and the Kizlyar Supreme Pioneer, but there are several distinct differences once you delve into the specs. While the Pioneer is about a quarter-inch longer, the Arbolito model is over a full ounce heavier. The blade thickness is approximately the same but the added ounce came in handy for batoning. Both will baton 3-inch-diameter hardwood—the beefier Arbolito piece just does it better. On the other hand, the more adroit Pioneer feels better doing tasks such as fine shaving and food prep. These are considerations when choosing such a knife since some bushcrafters do quite a bit of batoning while others don't. Both knives are very field worthy and deserving of your consideration.

I did some cursory tests using a quarter-inch-diameter Exotac fireROD to see how the knives fared at throwing sparks off the blade spines. The two models with uncoated blades—the Arbolito and Pioneer—fared best, throwing sparks right out of the gate. With its light coating, the Camillus Bushcrafter placed third. Meanwhile, the TOPS Fieldcraft would not throw sparks off the spine because its CeraKote® finish wouldn't allow it. However, in a pinch you can throw sparks off the small round notch below the Fieldcraft's blade edge.

The last tests were geared toward slicing and carving. The two beefier blades on the TOPS Fieldcraft and Arbolito Bushcraft excelled at taking off large, deep sliced chunks from a basswood block. The thinner blades of the Camillus Bushcraft and Kizylar Pioneer worked exceptionally well at fine shaving—great for making tinder and skinning bark. Their lightweight made the blades easier to manipulate. That said, I've seen experienced bushcrafters take off fine, delicate curls with a machete, so much of the skill needed for using any knife is enhanced with practice. I also tested the Camillus skinner blade on some 1/16-inch suede leather, and it handled flat slicing and pull-throughs very well. In subsequent testing all of the knives did an excellent job slicing 3/8-inch rappelling rope.

Handles are a matter of personal preference and I tend to like the wider ones on the Camillus Bushcrafter and TOPS Fieldcrafter. The Arbolito Bushcraft and Kizylar Pioneer grips, on the other hand, are better sculpted for finer work, so choose the one that suits you best.

CHOICE is EVERYTHING

While it takes extensive testing to really know a knife, the first impression runs on the four bushcraft models made one thing clear—there are many routes you can go, and your choice should reflect how you practice bushcraft.

For heavy-duty camp chores, the beefier TOPS Fieldcraft and Boker Arbolito Bushcraft will get the job done. The Kizylar Supreme Pioneer is a good all-around choice for light-to-medium daily duty, and will make meal prep a snap. If you plan to dress game in addition to daily duty, the Camillus Bushcrafter is an excellent choice. All have their fine points and it's just a matter of narrowing down your selection.

For the contact information for the sources in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 81.

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TESSALLATION

BRUCE AND BRIAN BUMP COLLABORATE ON A ONE-OF-A-KIND SAN-MAI PATTERN

The Tessallation Fighter by Bruce Bump (inset) originally was a bowie but that changed when the clip blade got longer than originally planned during the forging process. "Most of my bowies get stretched out" in the forge, Bruce laughed. "One minute it's too long and becomes a fighter instead of a bowie." (Caleb Royer knife image)



SPEC CHART

KNIFE: Tessallation Fighter

MAKER: Bruce Bump

BLADE LENGTH: 9.75"

BLADE MATERIAL: 15N20, 1084 and pure nickel in a mosaic damascus/san-mai pattern

HANDLE MATERIAL: African blackwood w/checkering by Blaine Barlow

FURNITURE: Stainless

MAKER'S LIST PRICE FOR A SIMILAR PIECE: \$3,500 (includes custom sheath w/alligator throat by Claude Scott)

ABS master smith Bruce Bump said he usually doesn't make two of anything, and in the case of his Tessallation Fighter that's too bad.

In this instance, Bruce said *tessallation* refers to the visual effect in the blade repeating itself and emitting a kind of three-dimensional look via the mosaic damascus/san-mai pattern. The unusual rhombus/diamond-shapes of the pattern are a result of Bruce and his son Brian forging individual pieces 3 inches long and a quarter-inch wide of materials that included pure nickel done with powder, and 15N20 and 1084 carbon steels for the laddered core.

"It was pretty difficult," Bruce said. "We had to make a bundle of it, and then tile it and forge it altogether so as to not destroy the rhombus/diamond-shaped pieces." The Bumps had to "kind of crush" it all to get the final weld, which distorted the overall look a bit. In this case, though, the distortion works.

For more information contact Bruce Bump, 509-386-8879 brucebump1@gmail.com.

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